

INFORMATIONAL HEARING AND SITE VISIT
BEFORE THE
CALIFORNIA ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of:)
)
Application for Certification for) Docket No.
The Solar Two Power Project by) 08-AFC-5
Stirling Energy Systems)
_____)

BOARD CHAMBERS
IMPERIAL COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER
940 WEST MAIN STREET, SUITE 211
EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA 92243

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2008

2:03 p.m.

Reported by:
Troy Ray
Contract No. 170-07-001

PETERS SHORTHAND REPORTING CORPORATION (916) 362-2345

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeffrey Byron, Presiding Member

Jackalyne Pfannenstiel, Associate Member

HEARING OFFICER AND ADVISORS

Raoul Renaud, Hearing Officer

Laurie ten Hope, Advisor

Kristy Chew, Advisor

STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT

Christopher Meyer, Project Manager
Aspen Environmental Group

Caryn Holmes, Staff Counsel

Mary Dyas, Compliance Project Manager

Negar Vahidi

Susan Lee

Keith Golden

Eric Knight

William Walters

PUBLIC ADVISER

Loreen McMahon

APPLICANT

John H. Egan, Senior Director, Project Development
Bob Ziden, Vice President
Sean Gallagher
Stirling Energy Systems, Inc.

Allan Thompson, Attorney
on behalf of Stirling Energy Systems, Inc.

APPLICANT

Angela Leiba, Senior Project Manager
URS Corporation

Corrine Lytle
Seth Hopkins
Amy Gramlich
Matt Moore
Brian Glenn
Theresa Miller
Emily Bierman
Cheryl Rustin
Sylvia Novoa
Kevin Harper
Christine Henning
Ken Kostok
Simon Day
Namid Arshadi
Sean Gallagher

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Steven J. Borchard, District Manager
James Stobaugh, National Office Project Manager
Thomas Pogacnik
Linda Kastoll
Tom Zale
Vicky Wood
Eryn Dreyfus
Carrie Simmons
Greg Thompson
Greg Miller
Allen Stein
Stephen Razo
David Briery

INTERVENORS

Paul Foley, Attorney
California Unions for Reliable Energy

ALSO PRESENT

Gary Wyatt, Chairman
County Board of Supervisors

John Pierre Menvielle, President
Imperial Irrigation District

ALSO PRESENT

Mark T. Gran, Councilmember
City of Imperial

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P R O C E E D I N G S

2:03 p.m.

PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Welcome and thank you for having us here. This is a wonderful setting and venue to be able to conduct this preliminary hearing.

Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Jeff Byron; I'm a Commissioner at the California Energy Commission, and I'm the Presiding Member on a Committee for this project, the Stirling Energy Systems Solar Two project. And with me is the Chairman of our Commission, who is actually the Associate Member on this Committee. And that's Jackalyne Pfannenstiel. And I'll ask the Chairman if she has some remarks in just a moment.

But if you'll indulge me for just a second I'd just like to introduce what we're doing here today in my own words. And then I'll turn it over to our Hearing Officer. And we'll also go around for other introductions so you'll have a sense of everyone who's here.

As I said, we are a Committee of two. There are five Commissioners at the California Energy Commission. And many of you might already know this. But what we're going to do here is

1 we're going to eventually make a recommendation to
2 the full Commission. And we're all independently
3 appointed Commissioners. We will make independent
4 decisions with regard to this case, as we do with
5 all the others. In a sense we're acting as judges
6 in this proceeding.

7 And it's not until after we've collected
8 all the evidence from the applicant, all the
9 analysis from our staff, who, by the way, will be
10 independent of us. We have no contact with them,
11 as our Hearing Officer will explain about the ex
12 parte rules.

13 And, of course, we're also -- there will
14 be intervenors in this case, and we're also very
15 interested in what the public has to say. And
16 that's why we're here.

17 The Commissioners maintain no contact at
18 any time with the parties in this case except in
19 publicly noticed meetings such as this.

20 So, the Hearing Officer is Mr. Raoul
21 Renaud to my right. He'll conduct the proceeding.
22 And he's also the point of contact as we go
23 forward on any procedural issues that come up.

24 I was going to just mention briefly, as
25 well, and we'll go into more detail on all of

1 these, this normally when we get an application
2 before the California Energy Commission we try and
3 get through this process within a year's time.

4 This one's a little more complicated in
5 that a good deal of the land that's being proposed
6 by the applicant is under the jurisdiction of the
7 Bureau of Land Management. And so we're actually
8 conducting this case and this hearing today with
9 the BLM. And you'll meet those gentlemen shortly,
10 who I just met this morning, as well.

11 So we have to be cognizant of the fact
12 that we have state law involved here, as well as
13 federal law. And you'll learn more about all of
14 that as we go on.

15 The primary reason that we're meeting
16 here today is to explain the process that we go
17 through. And, of course, you'll have opportunity
18 to meet all the participants. But we're really
19 learning about the basics of the project today.
20 And we want to make sure that the public process
21 is explained.

22 We have our Public Adviser here today
23 and you'll get to hear from her, as well, so that
24 we not only make sure that the public is included,
25 but we encourage public participation in this

1 process. And that is Loreen McMahon, who's here,
2 all the way, I believe, to my left. You'll hear
3 from her shortly.

4 And we also have some elected officials
5 here today. Elected officials are extremely
6 important to this process because obviously many
7 of them represent your interests. I think I can
8 mention them now, certainly.

9 Is that -- and if you wouldn't mind,
10 because we look forward to seeing and meeting you,
11 as well, I have Mr. John Pierre Menvielle, the
12 President of the Imperial Irrigation District.
13 Did I say that correctly?

14 MR. MENVIELLE: Yes, sir.

15 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Thank you.
16 Gary Wyatt, Chairman of the County Board of
17 Supervisors is here -- was here. Well, I hope he
18 returns.

19 And it looks like Mark T. Gran, and it
20 just says elected official. City of Imperial.
21 I'd like to welcome you very much; I hope we'll
22 have opportunity to hear from you this morning --
23 I'm sorry, this afternoon, as well.

24 Just by way of perspective, there are
25 about currently 24 siting cases like this before

1 the Commission right now. So, as you can imagine,
2 when we have committees of two of the
3 Commissioners, you can kind of see how that
4 workload divides out.

5 We take this very seriously at the
6 Commission. And what we're going to do here is go
7 through some preliminary process, introduce you to
8 the project. The applicant will be making a
9 presentation, as well as our staff.

10 And then we're going to take a bus ride,
11 as I understand it, around 3:30. And we'd really
12 like to try and hold to that schedule if we could
13 for a couple of reasons. One is to get there
14 before the sun sets. And the other is so that we
15 get home tonight in order to be back in Sacramento
16 for meetings tomorrow morning.

17 So, I'd like to thank you all for being
18 here and I appreciate your indulging me to just
19 kind of put my perspective on what we're all
20 about. And because our Chairman has been doing
21 this a lot longer than I have, I'd like to defer
22 to her and see if my Associate Member has any
23 comments.

24 ASSOCIATE MEMBER PFANNENSTIEL: Thank
25 you, Commissioner Byron. I just want to thank

1 everybody for hosting us for this preliminary
2 hearing today. It's really important for us to
3 get out into the community and hear from people
4 here on support or concerns or, you know, to let
5 us know. That's why we come out here, to hear
6 from you.

7 And so we appreciate the turnout. It's
8 important that there are people who both hear the
9 process and participate by going out and seeing
10 the site.

11 So, thank you for being here today.

12 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Thank you,
13 Madam Chairman. So, I'm going to sit back and
14 turn our hearing over to Hearing Officer Mr.
15 Renaud.

16 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you,
17 Commissioner Byron. And welcome, on my behalf, as
18 well. I think before we go any further let's get
19 introductions from the rest of the people who will
20 be making presentations today. We'll start with
21 the Energy Commission Staff, Chris Meyer. And if
22 you would perhaps introduce yourself and your
23 staff that you've brought with you.

24 MR. MEYER: Well, I'm Christopher Meyer;
25 I'll be the Project Manager for the Energy

1 Commission section of this. And as you've heard,
2 it's a joint process between the BLM and Energy
3 Commission.

4 I have actually several members of the
5 Energy Commission Staff here from Negar Vahidi
6 from land use, Susan Lee who will be working on
7 alternatives analysis. Also I have Keith Golden
8 from air quality, who's a senior, a lot of
9 experience in this, which will be very helpful.

10 Will Walters on air quality; Eric Knight
11 from the Energy Commission is an office manager
12 over the siting unit, who's in the back there. I
13 think I've gotten -- oh, and then Mary Dyas who
14 will speak a little later. She is the compliance
15 project manager assigned to this project.

16 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Excuse me, Mr.
17 Meyers. Would all the Energy Commission Staff
18 please hold up your hands for just a few moments
19 so everybody can kind of see who you are. And
20 these folks are available if you'd like to talk to
21 them.

22 MR. MEYER: Yeah. And one last, Caryn
23 Holmes is staff attorney on this project. Thank
24 you.

25 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Okay, thank you

1 very much. Immediately to Commissioner Byron's
2 left is his Advisor, Kristy Chew; and to her left
3 is Commissioner Byron's other Advisor, Laurie ten
4 Hope.

5 And now I'd like to ask Loreen McMahon
6 to introduce herself, please.

7 MS. McMAHON: Hi, Loreen McMahon, the
8 Associate Public Adviser. I will have one of the
9 first presentations to explain the Public
10 Adviser's role and how we can help you be involved
11 in the process.

12 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Great, thank
13 you. And now, on behalf of the applicant, could
14 you give us some introductions, please.

15 MR. EGAN: Yes, thank you very much. My
16 name is John Egan; I'm a Senior Director for
17 Project Development for Stirling Energy. And with
18 me today I have quite a crowd.

19 Angela Leiba behind me, who is our
20 Project Manager, with URS Corporation. Corrine
21 Lytle, who is over here on my left. Seth Hopkins,
22 socioeconomics; Amy Gramlich, visual resources;
23 Matt Moore, water resources; Brian Glenn, cultural
24 resources; Theresa Miller, biological resources;
25 Emily Bierman, public involvement; Cheryl Rustin,

1 biological resources; and Sylvia Novoa is our
2 translator today, back in the back.

3 For Stirling Energy, myself, Allan
4 Thompson, our counsel, here on the left. Kevin
5 Harper, front row; he's our Project Manager of the
6 project here in the area. Christine Henning is
7 next to him. Ken Kostok, one of our engineers.
8 Ed Vaughn, another engineer. Simon Day, my right-
9 hand person, when he's not in Ireland. Namid
10 Arshadi, our land man. Bob Ziden, one of the Vice
11 Presidents of Stirling Energy. And Sean
12 Gallagher.

13 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you very
14 much.

15 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: I don't think
16 we've ever had that many folks here from an
17 applicant.

18 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Well, it's a
19 good showing and we're pleased to have them here.

20 Are there people from the Bureau of Land
21 Management here who would care to introduce
22 themselves?

23 MR. BORCHARD: As I looked around the
24 room I realized there's a lot of people here from
25 the Bureau of Land Management. I'm Steve

1 Borchard; I'm the California Desert District
2 Manager.

3 I have several people here on District
4 Staff here today. The Project Manager for this
5 project is sitting to my right, Jim Stobaugh.
6 He's from our national office; he's a BLM National
7 Office Project Manager.

8 I have many people from the El Centro
9 Field Office here who will be working and have
10 been working on this project. Linda Kastoll, Tom
11 Zale, Vicky Wood, Eryn Dreyfus, Carrie Simmons.
12 And from my District Staff in Moreno Valley I have
13 Greg Thompson and Greg Miller and Allen Stein,
14 Steven Razo and David Briery.

15 And if there are other BLM employees I
16 haven't seen out there in the audience, I
17 apologize for not mentioning your name.

18 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: All right,
19 thank you. And do we have any representatives of
20 intervenors today? CURE?

21 MR. FOLEY: Yes.

22 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Please.

23 MR. FOLEY: Hi. My name is Paul Foley;
24 I'm here on behalf of California Unions for
25 Reliable Energy. And we filed a petition to

1 intervene recently.

2 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Yes, we did
3 receive that. Thank you for coming.

4 You might have noticed, we've asked
5 everybody who is going to say something to come to
6 a microphone. And there is a reason for that.
7 This proceeding, like all Energy Commission public
8 meetings, is being recorded and will be
9 transcribed into a written transcript.

10 Notice of this meeting was sent to all
11 interested parties, adjoining landowners,
12 government agencies and other individuals on
13 October 30, 2008. And we made sure to follow
14 California law in all respects in terms of
15 noticing these meetings.

16 The reason for that is that the Energy
17 Commission wants its proceedings to be as open and
18 transparent and available to the public as
19 possible. So, we do everything we can to make
20 sure that interested members of the public know
21 about meetings and are able to get to them. We
22 try to hold them in places that are convenient for
23 the people who may be affected by these projects.

24 We also require that the Energy
25 Commission Staff, the applicant and any other

1 party to the proceeding avoid private contact with
2 members of the Committee, that is the
3 Commissioners who are assigned to the case.

4 We want every fact, every piece of
5 information about the proceeding that is going to
6 be used to decide the proceeding to come out and
7 be available to the public in an open forum such
8 as this one. We call that the ex parte rule, and
9 it's set forth in the California Government Code.

10 The purpose of the hearing today is to
11 provide this public forum. This is the first of
12 several hearings and meetings that will take place
13 over the coming months. We're here to provide
14 information about the project, describe the
15 process by which the Energy Commission reviews
16 applications to build power generation facilities,
17 and to identify opportunities for public
18 participation.

19 And to accomplish that we will have a
20 series of presentations. First we will have a
21 presentation by the Public Adviser, Loreen
22 McMahon, who will explain about the ways the
23 public can participate in this case.

24 Then the applicant will provide a
25 presentation, giving information about the

1 proposed project. Then our Energy Commission
2 Staff and Bureau of Land Management will jointly
3 give a presentation about the review process.

4 And we will, as always, have an
5 opportunity, as well, for public comment. When it
6 is time for public comment we'll ask those who
7 wish to speak to come up to one of the microphones
8 up here and provide public comment.

9 We're hoping to be able to set out
10 toward the site visit at about 3:30. So, we'll
11 move right along and start in with the Public
12 Adviser's presentation, if you're ready. Loreen
13 McMahon. Thank you.

14 MS. McMAHON: Thank you, Raoul. I'll
15 add my good afternoon, as well. There's a lot of
16 nuances to this process and Chris will go through
17 the details of it. But another part of it is that
18 the Public Adviser's Office is another
19 independent, separate office. We don't -- so that
20 we can do our job, which is directly to interface
21 with the public and to help you understand the
22 process.

23 So I have some slides, and I apologize
24 to the people who have their backs to it. But
25 primarily we're supposed to help the public

1 understand the process and how they can best be
2 involved. There's different ways and different
3 levels of involvement.

4 I do have a brochure in the back of the
5 room. And I'll be sitting at that table
6 afterwards. I've got my cards out there, as well,
7 and I've got my presentation. So, if you miss
8 anything or you want to talk to me about it, or
9 get the information on it, that's back there.

10 At the Commission there's a lot of ways
11 to get information directly from us. You can get
12 it off the website, or from dockets. We have a
13 listserver and we have a library that's open to
14 the public.

15 In your community there's lots of places
16 to get information. The application for
17 certification for the project has been distributed
18 to the libraries. And also at the libraries you
19 can get access to our website if you don't have
20 internet access at home. That's another way to
21 view it and see what the details of the project
22 are.

23 For this particular project we've had a
24 lot of outreach that we've started quite awhile
25 ago. We sent mailing notices, as was already

1 mentioned, to property owners. We've sent them to
2 the librarians so they can post. Agencies and
3 elected officials. That was when we received the
4 application for certification at the beginning.

5 Then to notice this hearing we expanded
6 our list; we did community outreach and we tried
7 to meet local officials. We put notices out in
8 both -- they were bilingual. They included
9 Spanish. We put notices in newspapers. We did
10 the television and the radio.

11 And if you know of anybody who had not
12 received notification or anybody who would be
13 interested in this project, be sure to invite them
14 in and have them contact my office. We want to
15 make sure that everyone in the community has an
16 opportunity to know about it and to have their
17 voices heard, as the project moves forward.

18 Also in the back we have sign-up sheets.
19 I know some of you have been, you know, signing up
20 when you got in. If any -- we missed you, it's
21 not required that you sign up, but if you sign up
22 you can get mail, U.S. mail notice, or you can
23 sign up for the listserve and get email
24 notification. Or both, if you want both.

25 If you sign the blue cards that

1 information is not transcribed onto a list. So if
2 you want to be on any of our mailing lists, you
3 have to do it on the actual sign-up sheets.

4 I just wanted to also reiterate that
5 everybody's welcome to participate, and that we
6 really encourage it. We really want to hear what
7 the public has to say. Have the local residents
8 know about the issues in their area here.

9 So the two types of participation that
10 we have available for the public is informal and
11 formal. In the informal participation you can
12 make your voice heard by speaking at the workshops
13 and the informational hearings that we will be
14 having throughout the project.

15 You can also write comments that come to
16 you and that you want to have docketed into the
17 proceedings. If you do want to make comments at
18 this proceeding or any other one, this is the
19 little blue card that I mentioned. If you could
20 fill this out then I can give it to the Hearing
21 Officer so he can call you to the podium. That's
22 pretty much what these are used for.

23 I have some at the table that I'm
24 sitting at, at the back of the room, and I left
25 some out front, too. And then when you fill them

1 out give them to me and I'll bring them up to the
2 podium, or up to the Hearing Officer.

3 So, when you make comments, whether
4 they're written or whether they're verbal, they
5 are considered by the Commissioners. They're put
6 into the record. They're docketed in and they're
7 considered. But they are not considered evidence.
8 And that's a big distinction in these types of
9 hearings. And Chris will go over that later.

10 The our other type of participation is
11 the formal participation where you become an
12 intervenor. And you already heard that CURE has
13 filed a petition to become an intervenor.

14 And to do that, if you feel that you
15 want to be at that level of participation, we have
16 forms on the website so that you can file to
17 intervene. And our office will help you with
18 that. So please be sure to contact us so we can
19 help you fill out the forms and help you decide if
20 that's the type of involvement that you want to
21 have.

22 So anyone can file to be an intervenor.
23 And you don't have to be an attorney. And once
24 you file a petition, the Committee will look at
25 the petition and make a decision on whether or not

1 you're approved to intervene.

2 When you do file to become an intervenor
3 you will have the same rights and responsibilities
4 of all the other parties to the proceedings, which
5 would be in this case, CURE, it would be the
6 staff, it would be the applicant.

7 And comments that you file will be
8 considered evidence in the hearing. And you will
9 be able to present your own witnesses for
10 evidence, and cross-examine other people's
11 witnesses, as well. So you become a full party.

12 And lastly there's all the rest of my
13 contact information which is also available in
14 paper form back there. And it's also on the
15 website. So I will be in the back of the room if
16 anybody wants to talk to me about any of this, or
17 get any information from me. Thanks.

18 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Okay, thank
19 you, Loreen. And so now we'll move on to a joint
20 presentation by the Energy Commission Staff and
21 Bureau of Land Management.

22 MR. MEYER: While we get that set up on
23 the PowerPoint presentation, in the back of the
24 room there are paper handouts that have places for
25 notes. You can either grab them now or later.

1 Strongly recommend these for people who are going
2 to be involved in the project. It has a lot of
3 contact information and steps that will be very
4 useful throughout this process. So the websites
5 and things that you see here, telephone numbers,
6 are all on this handout for your future reference.

7 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Oh, I'm sorry,
8 did I say -- I think I got the order backwards.
9 I'm sorry, let's do the applicant first. I
10 apologize, just happened to be looking in that
11 direction. Applicant, please.

12 MR. EGAN: Thank you very much. Ladies
13 and gentlemen and Commissioners, again, John Egan,
14 Director of Project Development, Stirling Energy.

15 For those in the audience, if you
16 possibly can, see if you can get your eyeballs on
17 one of these two screens. It's a little tough,
18 but the presentation, for the most part, will be
19 on the screens.

20 This presentation today is about the
21 Stirling Energy Systems', we call ourselves SES,
22 the Solar Two project. The agenda for today, I'm
23 going to talk about Stirling Energy Systems; the
24 Solar Two project purpose; the Suncatcher, that's
25 what we call the unit; technology overview; the

1 Solar Two project description; resource areas; the
2 Solar Two project benefits.

3 And you've heard the large number of
4 people we have with us today, so there's a Q&A
5 team, or a question-and-answer team; they'll be
6 assembled on the buses. And they'll be in the
7 back of the room after this. And those in the
8 audience that have technical questions, they can
9 be answered there, as well.

10 Stirling Energy Systems. What we have
11 is a very unique technology; we call it the
12 Suncatcher. It combines a mirrored concentrator
13 dish with a highly efficient Stirling engine,
14 especially designed to convert sunlight into
15 electricity.

16 We've had the technology in development
17 since 1984, but the original engine goes clear
18 back to the early 1800s when a Scottish minister
19 named Stirling, spelled that way, invented this
20 engine during the period of the steam engine,
21 because steam engines were blowing up and killing
22 people. He designed this to be a safer method of
23 converting heat to mechanical energy.

24 We hold one of the world's records of
25 efficiency for conversion of sun's energy into

1 grid quality electricity at 31.25 percent. We're
2 a United States company. We're headquartered in
3 Phoenix, Arizona. We do have offices in Tustin,
4 California and Albuquerque at Sandia National Labs
5 is doing all our research.

6 So what's the project purpose? Our
7 purpose is to provide 750 megawatts of renewable
8 electrical capacity under a 20-year power purchase
9 agreement with San Diego Gas and Electric. To
10 develop renewable solar energy to help California
11 achieve its renewable portfolio standard, also
12 known as the RPS, requirement. This was raised
13 just recently, and most of us and the audience
14 know this, to 33 percent by Governor
15 Schwarzenegger, which was signed on November 17th.
16 So it's 33 percent by 2020.

17 We'd like to help protect the
18 environment by delivering clean, renewable solar
19 energy. And to assist the State of California in
20 meeting its goals reducing greenhouse gas
21 emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, also known as
22 Assembly Bill 32.

23 So an overview of the technology. It
24 actually in many ways is quite simple. The
25 sunlight shines on a large mirrored dish. The

1 mirrors are very simple, very similar to the
2 windows in your car. It's a silvery dish.

3 The light then shines into the back of
4 the engine which you can see on one of these
5 slides. The back of the engine, sunlight is
6 concentrated to approximately 7-inch beam. Then
7 it heats the back of the engine, driving a
8 mechanical process. It generates 25,000 watts of
9 electricity per unit. The electricity then is put
10 out on the grid for us all to use.

11 The unit has some unique environmental
12 properties. One, if you notice the bottom of the
13 unit -- I'll use this one over here to point --
14 there's only a 2-foot circle where this touches
15 the ground. The rest of the ground is untouched
16 by our units, therefore it doesn't have to be
17 plowed ground in order to put these up.

18 It consists of some fairly simple things
19 to make, such as a box truss which supports the
20 mirrors; a couple of azimuth drives that move the
21 unit around. And then a controller that always
22 knows where the sun is. Each one of these is like
23 an independent robot, be it one or a million of
24 them, they all work basically the same way.

25 In the morning the sun comes up; the

1 unit knows where the sun is. It goes and finds
2 the sun and plugs the light beam into the back of
3 the engine. Six seconds later the engine starts;
4 it starts putting power onto the grid.

5 The interesting thing about these units
6 is it's one of the few technologies right now
7 available that can be constructed in U.S. steel
8 plants, or U.S. auto plants. The possibility of
9 helping put Americans back to work and get us off
10 foreign oil.

11 The unit is designed to produce and
12 provide peak generation in peak demand periods.
13 So the engine is really about the size of an oil
14 drum. And this is a picture right here on this
15 one over here, on the left.

16 It has no combustion products, no air
17 emissions, no hazardous heat transfer fluids, no
18 fossil fuel infrastructure is needed to operate
19 it. It's cost competitive; it fits the model T
20 mass production model, can be made by the
21 thousands. Zero pollution. Provides peak power
22 when we all need it the most. And that's when we
23 get up in the morning, when the sun is up, and we
24 come home at night and turn on the air
25 conditioner.

1 The Solar Two project site is located
2 west of here in an area next to what's known as
3 Plaster City. And it is going to be constructed
4 in two phases. Phase one, 450 megawatts -- I'm
5 sorry, 300 megawatts, and phase two will be 450
6 megawatts. Phase one is shown in green on this
7 slide. Phase two is in the yellow.

8 It is connected to the grid via a gen
9 tieline which comes from the main center down an
10 existing power line to the IV substation where it
11 will be connected into the grid.

12 This will be one of the world's largest
13 solar power plants. And it probably will be when
14 it comes online, the world's largest, at least for
15 awhile. 750 megawatts of solar power right here
16 in the Imperial Valley.

17 It's located on approximately 6140 acres
18 of federal land administrated by the BLM. And 360
19 acres are private land. Total about ten square
20 miles of land.

21 The project was sited to avoid or to
22 minimize impacts to the environment, such as ORV,
23 offroad areas, and environmentally sensitive
24 areas.

25 Solar Two would consist totally, if the

1 whole thing was built out, as many as 30,000 of
2 these units with associated equipment and support
3 systems. Probably more interesting things is here
4 in the desert is our water need. At the startup
5 level of 300 megawatts we only need 14.5 acrefeet
6 of water to operate this system. And we need 32.7
7 acrefeet once we go into the full 750 megawatts.

8 To give you a feel for that, an average
9 house in San Diego with four people in it consumes
10 an acrefoot. So it's very minimal water use. And
11 it's mainly to wash our mirrors.

12 Again, two phases. Phase one, 12,000
13 Suncatchers, 300 megawatts. Phase two will expand
14 out to 18,000 additional Suncatchers for a total
15 of 450 megawatts. Total up 750 megawatts.

16 Subject to receipt of all necessary
17 approvals construction should start in about 2010
18 with a projected commercial operation start date
19 of later that same year.

20 It will require the construction of a
21 new 230 kilovolt substation which will be located
22 in the center of our project. Interconnected, as
23 I said earlier, with the SDG&E Imperial Valley
24 Substation along the existing power corridor.

25 The Sunrise Power Link is required for

1 us to move the second phase power of our unit, 450
2 megawatts, and for future clean, renewable power
3 projects in the Imperial Valley to move their
4 power into the grid.

5 It's hard to hide ten square miles of
6 solar dishes. It will be visible. It'll probably
7 be a tourist attraction. This is a picture of
8 generally what it would look like as you're going
9 down the freeway, the bottom picture on the slide.

10 Proposed project schedule, we've already
11 submitted the application for certification, and
12 that's how we got to this point. By 2009, fourth
13 quarter, we hope to receive certification of the
14 plant.

15 By 2010, first quarter, we'd like to
16 begin construction. In the third quarter, phase
17 one units should go online. 2012, second quarter,
18 phase two first units online. And by 2014
19 complete construction of 750-megawatt plant.

20 Resource areas. We're going to do this
21 to adhere to all local, state and federal laws,
22 ordinances, regulations and standards, known as
23 LORS. Cultural resources, we have done extensive
24 archeological and historical architecture,
25 pedestrian surveys to try to identify and

1 potentially mitigate adverse cultural effects of
2 the project.

3 Visual resources surveys were also
4 conducted, including the preparation of visual
5 simulations like you just saw. The visual
6 character of the area will change.

7 Land use. The project site, again, was
8 chosen carefully to avoid impacts to recreational
9 land uses including ORVs. BLM would require the
10 approval of a land use amendment issuance of a
11 right-of-way grant for us to go forward.

12 Solar Two project benefits. Would help
13 California achieve its RPS standard, and also help
14 California reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to
15 1990 levels by 2020.

16 Jobs. We would create approximately 106
17 permanent jobs in the Imperial Valley. This would
18 be supervisory, general, administrative,
19 construction, operations and maintenance.
20 Typically sociologists put a 30 multiplier on new
21 jobs, therefore we're creating close to 500
22 permanent new opportunities here in the valley.

23 Construction of Solar Two would lead to
24 increased revenue in the area from sales tax due
25 to construction and operation employees' economic

1 activities. Solar Two would provide approximately
2 60 million in 2008 dollars in construction payroll
3 with an average monthly construction workforce of
4 approximately 360 people. Total project value, \$1
5 billion approximately.

6 Educational benefits have already
7 started. We've been working with some of the
8 local schools and tech colleges. We're just
9 getting started on this. We'd like to, as much as
10 possible hire local. We expect a potential boost
11 in tourism, as well.

12 I'd like to thank you for your time.
13 And if you notice on the slide, there's both our
14 address and the California Energy Commission. I
15 also have cards if anybody's interested. Thank
16 you very much.

17 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you very
18 much. And now we'll turn to a presentation by the
19 staff and the Bureau of Land Management. Sorry if
20 I scared you there earlier, Chris. Now, it's your
21 turn.

22 MR. MEYER: Just sort of threw me for a
23 loop there, I was trying to catch up.

24 Okay, once again, Christopher Meyer. I
25 will be working on the Energy Commission portion

1 of this joint process. And to my right is Jim
2 Stobaugh.

3 MR. STOBAUGH: Hi, I'm Jim Stobaugh, the
4 Project Manager assigned for the Bureau of Land
5 Management.

6 MR. MEYER: And just a second here,
7 we're -- hold on just a second.

8 (Pause.)

9 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: While there's a
10 break in the action can I just ask our audience if
11 you wouldn't mind just raising your hand if you're
12 here because you're a local resident or someone
13 who lives here in southern California that's
14 interested in this project and that's why you're
15 here.

16 Thank you very much. It's just that we
17 have so many applicants and so many members of the
18 staff and others here, it was just good to see
19 that there were members of the public here today.

20 (Laughter.)

21 MR. STOBAUGH: Commissioner Byron, I'd
22 really like to thank the Commission for this
23 opportunity, as well, on behalf of the BLM, as
24 well as a wonderful turnout for this, because
25 we're here for the folks here to provide them the

1 opportunity to input, so it's great to see the
2 turnout we have.

3 MR. MEYER: Okay, as I said before,
4 it'll be a joint process. And this presentation
5 will also be on our website for those of you who
6 go later, you can always see this as a pdf. It'll
7 have all the same information, if you have any
8 questions on the process, contact information.

9 And as I said, it's going to be a joint
10 process. Jim and I will be working very closely
11 together to make sure that both NEPA and CEQA
12 aspects of this project are addressed.

13 MR. STOBAUGH: Yes, and as you can see
14 from the slide, the Bureau of Land Management is
15 tasked or charged with administering this
16 application through our Federal Land Policy and
17 Management Act. That's our FLPMA's, sometimes as
18 we refer to it as. That is what the right-of-way
19 is actually filed under, what the Stirling Energy
20 Systems is looking for a decision from BLM.

21 And we also, as the second bullet talks
22 about, is review our land use planning and
23 processing and land use plan amendment. Because
24 under the current application and our current land
25 use plan, which I'm going to hold up quickly here,

1 it's the California Desert Conservation Area Plan
2 passed in 1980. Sites associated with power
3 generation and transmission sites identified in
4 the plan, such as this one, will be considered
5 through plan amendment process.

6 And if I could, just to help frame BLM's
7 purpose and need in here, so folks understand
8 what's involved with our process and why we're
9 here asking for your input, really the purpose of
10 BLM's action, and I want to stress that, BLM's
11 action, is to provide the applicant a response
12 decision in processing their application for a
13 right-of-way grant for the legal use and access of
14 the public lands managed by BLM.

15 And the need for that action, in view of
16 the underlying opportunity here, is established by
17 FLPMA, our responsibilities under FLPMA, as well
18 as the National Environmental Policy Act and other
19 laws to respond to the applicant's request for
20 these right-of-way of the legal use opportunities
21 on this, on the public lands.

22 And that's not only just from the
23 construction and operation, even through the
24 decommissioning of the proposed concentrated solar
25 thermal generation plan related facilities.

1 So, the decision we're looking at down
2 the road here is BLM to decide whether or not to
3 grant a right-of-way. And if so, under what terms
4 and conditions will that be.

5 So, that's kind of helping your frame,
6 if you would, and kind of the gist behind what
7 most of the bullets are on this particular slide.

8 MR. MEYER: Okay. And the Energy
9 Commission's role, as you've heard from several
10 people already, is we're looking at the CEQA side
11 versus the NEPA side. And our role is to look at
12 thermal power plants that are greater than 50
13 megawatts.

14 What you may hear this back and forth,
15 when we talk about thermal, this is referring to
16 any power plants that derive their electricity
17 from a process that is involving heat. Something
18 like a photovoltaic site, wind, those do not have
19 a heat component, and are therefore outside the
20 jurisdiction of the Energy Commission.

21 Anything like solar troughs or this
22 project, which is the Stirling engines using heat,
23 fall into the jurisdiction of the Energy
24 Commission.

25 We also look at other facilities such as

1 the transmission lines that are associated with
2 this project. We look to the first point of
3 interconnection which basically is from the
4 project site to the substation in this case.

5 And we also look at if there are
6 portions of transmission lines after that point
7 that will need to get upgraded, you know, heavier
8 wires, larger poles, anything of that nature,
9 because of this project, we'll look at those in
10 more of a cursory manner. And they also have to
11 be dealt with at a later point.

12 We also deal with water supply systems,
13 you know, for this project; you know, access roads
14 that may be necessary; laydown areas that are not
15 directly part of the process, but will be areas
16 that will be disturbed because of the construction
17 or operation.

18 And as I said, you know, we are the lead
19 agency for the CEQA portion, which is the
20 California Environmental Quality Act.

21 And one of the things that both Jim and
22 I worked very closely on is to make sure that any
23 local agencies, federal agencies, state agencies
24 that have jurisdiction on this process, who are
25 going to be, you know, providing this information

1 either on cultural, biological issues, to make
2 sure that we work with them.

3 Also work with any local agencies,
4 elected officials, to make sure that their
5 concerns, comments are addressed in our
6 environmental document.

7 So basically there are three parts of
8 the Energy Commission's process which the BLM and
9 the Energy Commission will be working to align
10 these as much as possible.

11 The first stage has already occurred,
12 which is data adequacy. When we refer to
13 something as data adequate we do not mean that it
14 has every bit of information that we need to go
15 forward. We're just saying that data adequacy is
16 the minimum to accept that application as
17 adequate. It has the minimum that we need to
18 start the whole process.

19 Then what brings us to the second phase,
20 which is the discovery and analysis. One of the
21 first steps on that is data requests where we say,
22 okay, you've given us the minimum amount of
23 information for your application to be considered
24 complete. Now we need additional information to
25 do a full and comprehensive environmental

1 analysis.

2 So that's where we start asking the
3 applicant questions. We've sent out the first
4 part of our data request to the applicant already.
5 And they'll be, by about December 9th they'll be
6 getting us information back on that.

7 Another thing we'll talk about a little
8 bit more later is the issues identification
9 report. That's basically a very early document in
10 the process where we say what major issues, what
11 potentially are either show-stoppers or
12 significant environmental areas could be impacted
13 from the proposed project. And that's online, as
14 well. So you can see the entire report. I'll
15 talk about it a little bit more later.

16 The public workshops, as Raoul talked
17 about, there will be a couple different types of
18 public meetings, forums, for people to give
19 comments. One will be the hearings like this,
20 which will be a very formal setting. It'll have a
21 court reporter; there'll be an official record.

22 Later on you'll have workshops that will
23 basically be between the BLM Staff, Energy
24 Commission Staff, the applicant, any intervenors,
25 other parties. And because of the ex parte rule

1 and sort of the open meeting rules, we have to
2 have any substantive discussions on topics in the
3 public view. So that any decisions that we make,
4 issues that we need to get clarified, we have to
5 make those in the full view of the public so you
6 know what issues are going back and forth on the
7 project.

8 So basically these workshops are almost
9 like it's an open meeting. It'll be a meeting
10 between the parties to get work done. But it
11 offers the public a chance to ask questions, get
12 clarification.

13 So we use this as a chance for -- the
14 Energy Commission to work with the BLM to open
15 this as part of a scoping process.

16 And the next workshop, you know, we'll
17 talk about, it'll be fully noticed, will be on
18 December 18th. That will give our staff a little
19 time to get the data responses in. It'll be a
20 data response, issues resolution, workshop and
21 scoping. And that'll be the final sort of scoping
22 workshop of the process. And then the scoping
23 period for the BLM within 50 days after that. So
24 you have a little bit more time to get scoping
25 comments in there.

1 Then the preliminary and final staff
2 assessments. That's, for those of you who are
3 familiar with, like the environmental impact
4 reports, environmental impact statements, sort of
5 a NEPA/CEQA process. Our preliminary and final
6 staff assessments are equivalent to an
7 environmental impact report.

8 And basically then we come to the third
9 portion, after our staff works together with the
10 BLM, to get these preliminary and final documents
11 out, on my side I turn that over to the Committee.

12 And then the Committee will go ahead and
13 the Hearing Officer, Raoul, will be holding
14 evidentiary hearings, and the Committee will put
15 together a decision.

16 This gives you a little bit of an idea,
17 sort of that same process of how it goes through.
18 It's just sort of a good place just to sort of see
19 how things flow together between the hearings and
20 the proposed decision and the final decision.

21 And these different processes, different
22 hearings and the spaces between the different
23 preliminary documents and the next one, there'll
24 be a lot of public involvement for people to
25 provide us comments.

1 And we always ask people to provide
2 written comments wherever possible. Anything you
3 give me in writing, it makes it very easy for me
4 to pass it on to staff, make sure everyone
5 understands exactly what you're asking for, what
6 questions, concerns you have. So that I don't
7 have to try to interpret what your concerns are as
8 I pass them on.

9 And I've pretty much gone through most
10 of this, as I talked about before. This goes into
11 a little bit more detail you can reference later.
12 But when we look at our discovery and analysis
13 process, the job of staff is to work as almost a
14 disinterested third party. We're neither an
15 opponent or proponent of the project.

16 Our job is to make sure that the public
17 questions are addressed, and that the public good
18 is looked after. And just to facilitate that
19 process.

20 And that brings us, you know, to after
21 the staff has finished our part, our main job is
22 to give the Committee as much information as
23 possible, to give a very complete record so that
24 they can make the best decision possible. As has
25 been said several times before, any information

1 you're able to provide us helps us get a better
2 product.

3 So, you know, the more public
4 participation we can get, more comments we can get
5 early in the process, that makes sure that we can
6 address them in our preliminary and our final
7 documents, and give the Committee a complete
8 record.

9 And one last thing just on the last one,
10 just very briefly, the Energy Commission, at the
11 very end of our process, one of our important
12 roles is any decision that comes out of the Energy
13 Commission to allow to go forward during
14 construction, the Energy Commission has the
15 responsibility to make sure that any conditions,
16 all conditions, are enforced throughout the
17 construction and operation.

18 So we'll be working with the BLM and
19 their code enforcement staff to make sure that if
20 we go to a point where this project is recommended
21 and it does actually get approved, in that case
22 any conditions that are put in there to mitigate
23 environmental or potential environmental impacts,
24 we have a special crew that is focused on making
25 sure that that happens.

1 And as I introduced before, Mary Dyas is
2 with our compliance unit and she'll be taking
3 charge of that.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. STOBAUGH: Thanks, Christopher. One
6 of the things, to just kind of let the audience
7 realize, as you've been hearing Christopher, we're
8 walking down this aisle together, if you would.

9 We both have responsibilities, one at
10 the state, and, of course, at the federal level.
11 There has been a memorandum of understanding
12 developed between BLM and the Energy Commission.
13 And the intent behind that is to conduct a joint
14 environmental review of the Solar Two project into
15 a single NEPA, as I referred to earlier, under
16 BLM's guidelines, and CEQA, the state process, to
17 share in the preparation of a joint environmental
18 analysis. And to avoid duplication, if you would,
19 of our staffs; share that expertise among our
20 staffs.

21 As well as promote the intergovernmental
22 coordination, both the local, state and federal
23 levels. And facilitate public review. You know,
24 instead of having you guys here one set of
25 meetings, yet another set of meetings, and you

1 realize we're all walking down the analyzing the
2 same project. Let's bring them together like this
3 so you can understand we are walking down two
4 process and trying to combine the efforts, as well
5 as the efficiencies, that we can, you know, build
6 in with them.

7 And the other points I just bring up
8 here is the policies. We want -- the second
9 bullet there is we want to facilitate
10 environmentally responsibility commercial
11 development of solar energy projects on the public
12 lands.

13 That's the gist of what that W,
14 Washington Office instruction memorandum of 2007-
15 97 gets into. And there's copies, as you can see
16 at the bottom there. You can go to it and pull up
17 that particular document. But that's what the
18 policy is after.

19 We want to also look at the right-of-way
20 applications for solar energy projects. They're
21 all considered a high priority that will be
22 processed in a timely manner. And if approved, as
23 I mentioned earlier, it would be approved under
24 Title 5 of the Federal Land Policy and Management
25 Act.

1 So, as we, again we're walking down,
2 trying to do this in a joint, collaborative effort
3 to facilitate and invite, at the same time, the
4 public's input and your perspective of what you
5 see as far as the related issues, if you would, or
6 concerns you may have in this.

7 And I want to reiterate something
8 Christopher brought up. Of course, you may speak
9 on things. But if we could -- we certainly want
10 to encourage written comments. That way we know
11 exactly what you are trying to state in there, and
12 we will look at those verbatim. So we have in
13 your own words the comments you really want to
14 place in any type of input regarding this project.

15 So strongly encourage you, if you will,
16 to not only do it verbally, but at minimum do it
17 in writing. And hopefully we'll have it right.
18 We'll be able to track it. We'll even be able to
19 see where we addressed it in our NEPA and CEQA
20 documents in the processes, to make sure that the
21 comment was addressed.

22 This is a slide that shows basically the
23 regulations that the Bureau of Land Management is
24 going to be working under, 43 Code of Federal
25 Regulations 2800, to walk through our processes.

1 These two sites on here are on the
2 internet on the website. The first one is just
3 general right-of-way guidance. And the one down
4 at the bottom on solar right-of-way is
5 specifically getting at the policies and that
6 instruction memorandum that was referred to on the
7 previous slide.

8 So as we go through the BLM authorized
9 role in this is going to look at the initial
10 response to the proposal; go through this
11 preapplication screening to see much like
12 Christopher and them were talking about, what do
13 we have in an application to consider it complete
14 enough to move on to acceptance in processing. Or
15 is it something we know through land use planning
16 would not be warranted or allowed.

17 This one actually is going to require a
18 land use plan amendment, and is allowable under
19 the rules of land use plans, if you would, to
20 consider an amendment for this type of proposal.
21 It's about it being, you know, excluding or
22 disallowing all together.

23 We conduct the scoping. You can see
24 where we're at in this slide right here today.
25 And after this we collect your input. We begin

1 developing our environmental impact statement
2 document. And at the same time, it's a land use
3 plan amendment.

4 So, as I mentioned, the two purposes and
5 needs earlier, that's the reason why the BLM is
6 looking at a twofold decision in this case. So we
7 have a decision on the application, as well as the
8 approval of the land use plan amendment, to
9 authorize the use, as Christopher referred to as
10 what the Commission is up to, we have to look at
11 administering this all the way through its
12 termination. So cradle to grave.

13 Here, if you want, real quick -- I'm not
14 going to go into all of the points, but as you can
15 see, here is the process both for under the
16 National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA, for an
17 environmental impact statement, as well as the
18 land use plan amendment.

19 The notice of intent was released on
20 October 17th in the Federal Register. We're at
21 this public scoping period right now. From this
22 we will help us, from the information and data
23 requests and working with the CEC on this, help
24 us, as well as our own data and our own staff
25 under Steve Borchard's and Vicky Wood's

1 organization here, who really have the on-the-
2 ground expertise of looking at things more
3 realistically and practically, will formulate our
4 alternatives to be considered, as well.

5 And then again, eventually, you can see
6 there's going to be the preparation of a draft
7 environmental impact statement, as well as the
8 draft land use plan amendment.

9 That'll have a 90-day comment period.
10 So there is, after the scoping ends for the front
11 end to develop that draft EIS, will be a 90-day
12 comment period afforded you in the future.

13 There'll also be another comment period
14 for 30 days after the final, as you can see, as we
15 work our way toward the record of decision and
16 approval of the land use plan amendment.

17 And as Christopher brought up, as well,
18 you can see the last little bullet is monitoring
19 the project is all a part of the process, as well.

20 Thanks a lot.

21 MR. MEYER: Okay, I won't go through
22 this because you've actually heard the
23 introductions of everyone here, but this is a
24 slide that's good for you to reference throughout
25 the process if you want to contact any of the

1 parties from the Energy Commission side.

2 MR. STOBAUGH: And here's the contact
3 information for the Bureau of Land Management. As
4 you can see, the receipt of scoping comments are
5 actually going to Christopher Meyer and the
6 Commission, itself. Again, trying to streamline
7 and make convenience where these comments are
8 going in our joint effort to analyze this
9 proposal.

10 MR. MEYER: And Loreen actually did a
11 great job just going through the public
12 participation process. And this just gives you a
13 little bit more information on the listserver. If
14 you go to the Energy Commission website you'll see
15 right on the website there is a little box there
16 you can enter your email address in. And that way
17 anything that gets put on the website you'll get
18 an automatic email. It's a great way of just
19 keeping up to date if there are any changes on the
20 project website, any new documents that are added.

21 And as I talked about before,, our
22 dockets unit, you know, will keep a complete
23 record. Even documents that are just letters
24 going back and forth, memos, records of
25 conversations that may not go onto our website.

1 There'll be a complete docket log of those.

2 And that docket log will be on the
3 website. You can see, even if it's not printed as
4 a full document, it'll be on the website as a
5 list. And if there's anything you see in there
6 that you'd like to see a copy of, you can contact
7 the dockets unit to get a copy.

8 And basically this is just stuff we've
9 gone over before, as far as the different ways you
10 can make oral comments in a forum such as this,
11 and there'll be a record. At the different
12 workshops, which will be run by Jim and I. Your
13 opportunities to come up and make, you know, oral
14 comments, as well.

15 But there will not be a reporter at
16 those workshops, the staff workshops. So any
17 comments you make there it's just really dependent
18 on how well our staff can write down your comments
19 and take notes on it.

20 So it's great for you to come out and
21 express your issues to everyone verbally. But if
22 it's really an issue that you want us to deal with
23 in sort of very strict detail, following it up
24 with a written comment and just send it to my
25 attention, would be wonderful. And then I can

1 make sure that Jim and all the other parties get a
2 copy of your comments and your questions.

3 And a formal intervenor is -- you know,
4 she's gone over fairly well, and it's a good idea,
5 when you're thinking of potentially becoming a
6 formal intervenor, talk to Loreen as far as what
7 both of the advantages and also responsibilities.
8 Because by being a formal intervenor, it changes
9 some of the responsibilities you have as a party
10 in the case. And it's good to understand this
11 before you decide, you know, make that decision.

12 And this is just what the webpage looks
13 like. You can see where the listserver is, the
14 little box there. So this will be consistently
15 updated throughout the project. And you'll see
16 different tabs. You can go to different places
17 throughout.

18 Actually when you go here you can also
19 go backwards onto the Energy Commission's website
20 and see other cases. Also you'll see the
21 different memorandums of understanding that Jim
22 spoke of. Those things are all in pdf so you can
23 look and see what the details of those are, as
24 well.

25 MR. STobaugh: And this is the Bureau of

1 Land Management's site for over here and El
2 Centro, as well. So you can -- you know you're in
3 the right place if your slide looks like this when
4 you bring it up.

5 MR. MEYER: Just to make a note, I think
6 both of our websites have links to our
7 counterparts. So, if you find one of them, you
8 should be able to, you know, look around and
9 you'll find a link to the corresponding agency's
10 website on the same project.

11 Okay, this bring us to the staff issues
12 identification report, which I talked about
13 before. Sort of our initial impressions of the
14 project in looking through the application for is
15 it complete, and also starting to formulate our
16 data requests.

17 Staff, at that point, looks at the
18 things that they say, okay, I have lots of
19 questions on a certain area. And if it looks like
20 it could be a significant issue, either delaying
21 the project or possibly affecting staff's ability
22 to make a recommendation, we try to focus on those
23 things early on so that the public understands
24 what issues staff is focusing on, so you can make
25 comments specific to those areas.

1 On this project really there are three
2 areas, and then the cumulative impacts. So,
3 cultural resources is one of the big areas. Land
4 use, as you can imagine, for a project of this
5 size. Visual resources, again from the scope.

6 When we talk of cumulative effects and
7 alternatives, cumulative effects is for almost any
8 area that you can have an environmental impact.
9 We want to look at are there four or five other
10 projects in this area, that this project may not
11 have a significant impact, but when you add it to
12 all of the other ones that may not have a
13 significant impact, either, but cumulatively there
14 is a significant impact. That's one of the things
15 that the Energy Commission and the BLM will be
16 looking at throughout this process.

17 And then alternatives. If a significant
18 impact is identified in any one of the technical
19 -- either engineering or environmental areas, we
20 will be looking at alternatives that focus on
21 reducing that to a less-than-significant impact.

22 Cultural resources. Potential issues on
23 this project are based on just both the frequency
24 of the cultural resources, basically meaning for
25 this 10-square-mile portion. There are a lot of

1 archeological resources on this land. And we're
2 still doing a lot of work and the applicant is
3 doing a lot of work, as well, trying to determine
4 the level of importance and significance of these
5 different sites. And what potential impact the
6 proposed project would have on them.

7 So, the Energy Commission Staff and the
8 Bureau of Land Management Staff, the cultural
9 resource experts, have been working very hard on
10 this one. But, as you can imagine, when most
11 power plants traditionally will affect up to maybe
12 100 acres maximum, looking at 6500 acres is a lot
13 of paperwork.

14 So, we're anticipating having data
15 requests on that, you know, probably just after
16 the first of the year -- excuse me, the first of
17 December.

18 The other one we talk about potential
19 discoveries, that's just a very simple way of
20 saying we don't know what's under the ground. We
21 may have a situation where any number of
22 activities could have either obscured or removed a
23 surface expression of an archeological site.

24 When the project starts getting
25 constructed we could discover that there are

1 things there that we didn't know about. So,
2 that's one thing we have to make sure that our
3 documents address and we keep in consideration.

4 And then the mitigation is a part of
5 that. The concern on cultural, you know, how can
6 you mitigate these impacts.

7 Land use, as I said, is simply right now
8 if you have land that is open for potential use by
9 the public for multiple uses, whether it's
10 camping, hiking, offroad use, to transfer that
11 land out of the general public use into a more
12 industrial use for the production of power, staff
13 considers that a potentially significant impact to
14 the public.

15 And that's something that we're going to
16 be looking at very closely. And BLM is going to
17 be really taking the lead on that, working with
18 our staff. And, as I say, this is one where the
19 cumulative impact becomes big. And I'll let Jim
20 talk about that, as far as just the BLM, what
21 they're dealing with right now.

22 MR. STobaugh: Well, there are solar
23 power generation -- Steve, you're actually in the
24 frontlines on this, what you're seeing. But, how
25 many applications right now we have?

1 MR. BORCHARD: Seventy-seven.

2 MR. STOBAUGH: Seventy-seven

3 applications. I mean it's just unbelievable what
4 we've looked at.

5 You know, we're looking at the -- you
6 have the 30,000 25 kilovolt solar power dishes
7 that John Egan had covered in there. And these
8 are wonderful maps, by the way, and slides that we
9 have to look at. So if you want a picture's-
10 worth-a-thousand-words.

11 But the related structures you have, I
12 mean you have a main services complex; you've got
13 assembly buildings; you got a 230 kilovolt
14 electrical substation to make this work. The
15 access roads and the water supply lines. And then
16 there's the 10.3-mile, double-circuit 230 kV line
17 that's going to put this -- if approved, going to
18 put this on the grid, itself.

19 So, you have, you know, a wide array, if
20 you would, of impacts to look at. And the links,
21 as well, as with other projects in this vicinity.

22 So, yes, it is going to be a large-scale
23 scope of looking at things, but there are
24 processes in place for both the state and the
25 federal government to deal with them. And we're

1 going to walk through the process. And you are
2 participants being invited, as of today, to walk
3 through that process with us.

4 MR. MEYER: And visual resources, as you
5 can imagine, as John pointed out, that, you know,
6 you can't hide 30,000 of these 40-foot
7 Suncatchers. They do sort of jump out at you.

8 You know, whereas he says, we're going
9 to look at it, you know, there are some people who
10 are going to be really just fascinated to come see
11 them. Staff has to look at this as far as what is
12 the impact of having that many units of that size,
13 you know, in a landscape that right now is just
14 more of an open desert.

15 And the development of the VRM
16 classifications is going to fall into the BLM.
17 It's just to make sure that when our visual staff
18 and BLM visual staff work together that the
19 criteria that we use meet the BLM's needs.

20 I think I pretty much spoke about this,
21 we've covered it pretty well, it's just the
22 cumulative effects is something that we're going
23 to be looking at very closely just because of the
24 sheer number of renewable projects.

25 And not just thermal, but you know,

1 wind, photovoltaic, other projects in the nature
2 that if they're planned for this area they're not
3 going to take up land, have visual impacts, any of
4 the areas. We have to look at those in a
5 cumulative nature.

6 And let me point out, this is a proposed
7 schedule. This is something that staff, both on
8 the BLM and the Energy Commission, we're looking
9 at how fast -- if everything goes really smoothly,
10 how fast can we push this thing through to the
11 point where we can make a recommendation, either
12 for or against this project.

13 And as I say, you know, our job is to be
14 objective on this as neither a proponent or an
15 opponent of the project. So we don't presuppose
16 that we're going to make recommendations to our
17 respective management teams, and in my case, the
18 Commission, to either approve or deny it at this
19 point.

20 But this schedule is something that I
21 have worked with Jim on, and ultimately the
22 Committee that's assigned to this project will
23 look at that. And they will put out an official
24 schedule that they will propose.

25 And, as I say, this project, because

1 it's a joint document between the Energy
2 Commission and the BLM, there will be procedural
3 issues that take a little bit more time than a
4 normal Energy Commission project, plus the sheer
5 volume of information we're dealing with with a
6 site of this size.

7 So our normal 12-month process is just
8 not viable here. And one of the biggest things
9 that I'll say to everyone is this will not be a
10 schedule-driven exercise. We are not going to
11 publish a document before it's ready.

12 We're going to get the information and
13 provide a comprehensive document that'll give the
14 public a chance to participate, but also we want
15 to get the best document possible produced. And
16 if that affects the schedule, unfortunately it
17 does. We'll just work as fast as we can to get a
18 good product together for you, as the public, to
19 review, so that we can get the best comments back
20 from you to get this process, you know, continue
21 it going in a good direction.

22 And I think I've sort of hit all the
23 caveats. I think I made all the possible excuses
24 I can make on why the schedule may get delayed a
25 little bit.

1 It's one of the things that Jim can
2 speak on awhile is that in the NEPA process there
3 are some other protest periods.

4 MR. STOBAUGH: Once we get to a record
5 of decision, should we go with the approval of a
6 land use plan amendment and there after the final,
7 well, actually the issuance of the final
8 environmental impact statement, there will be a
9 30-day availability for review by the public, as
10 well as what's part of that is a protest
11 opportunity.

12 And if there are no protests, you know,
13 the process can move along after 30 days. If
14 there are protests, we're looking more at a 90-day
15 process to deal with rendering resolution with the
16 protests after the final environmental impact
17 statement is published.

18 MR. MEYER: And that concludes my
19 presentation on our process for the siting and I'd
20 like to ask Mary Dyas, the Compliance Project
21 Manager, to speak to you very briefly on our
22 compliance project, if the project were to be
23 approved, the post-certification process.

24 MS. DYAS: Good afternoon, everyone. My
25 name is Mary Dyas; I'm the Compliance Project

1 Manager assigned to this project for the Energy
2 Commission.

3 And I first off want to make sure,
4 assure you that my being here and giving this
5 presentation by no means is meant to imply or
6 assure that the project has been approved.
7 Approval or disapproval will come after the
8 comprehensive siting process, which Chris and the
9 BLM Staff have just gone over for you.

10 I'm here to assure you that if the
11 project is licensed, there is a rigorous ongoing
12 monitoring process by the compliance unit for the
13 proposed project to insure that it is built,
14 constructed and operated in accordance with all
15 applicable laws, ordinances, regulations and
16 standards, to include the conditions of
17 certification that are put forth in the final
18 documents that's going to be produced.

19 In addition, also before I move on to
20 that next step, during the siting process now is
21 the appropriate time for the public, as well as
22 agencies and all other parties to the project, to
23 comment on the document and the conditions of
24 certification, because it becomes much more
25 difficult to change the conditions once the

1 license is issued.

2 In addition to myself and Commission
3 management, there is a third-party delegate
4 involved in the compliance process to oversee the
5 construction of the project. This delegate is a
6 chief building official, which is delegated by the
7 Energy Commission.

8 The CBO, or chief building official, can
9 be a local building official such as the city or
10 building department, but in most cases it is a
11 third-party company from the preapproved statewide
12 list of qualified delegate CBOs that is maintained
13 by the compliance unit at the Commission.

14 And though the CBO reports directly to
15 the Commission compliance unit, their expenses and
16 activities are paid for by the applicant.

17 In most cases, shortly after this final
18 staff assessment or final EIS, I don't know what
19 they're calling it for sure, shortly after that
20 document the final document is published, the
21 Compliance Project Manager, in this case myself,
22 and legal staff will delegate authority to enforce
23 onsite compliance to the CBO through a memorandum
24 of understanding.

25 The delegate CBO is responsible for

1 monitoring all critical construction activities to
2 insure compliance with facility design,
3 transmission system engineering. And to insure
4 that related civil, structural, electrical and
5 mechanical codes are consistent with county, state
6 and federal building requirements.

7 Also, once a project is licensed, a
8 compliance fee is imposed on the project. And
9 those fees are due after licensing and then every
10 year after that for the life of the project, by
11 July 1st.

12 And occasionally, as I mentioned, it's
13 more difficult to change the conditions of
14 certification after the license, but occasionally
15 a project owner may decide that they do want to
16 make changes. And some of those changes may be
17 due to new technology or unforeseen constraints
18 that have come up.

19 If this occurs, the applicant will be
20 required to contact the Commission compliance unit
21 and arrange a pre-amendment petition meeting to
22 discuss the proposed changes. And then, if and
23 when the owner proceeds with an amendment
24 petition, a notice of receipt will be sent out to
25 the combined mailing lists that will include all

1 the names that are on the mailing list in the
2 siting process, as well as any additional ones
3 that have been added during the compliance
4 process. And this also includes the surrounding
5 landowners and residents within 1000 feet of the
6 project.

7 Staff will then process the amendment,
8 and where needed will provide technical analysis
9 similar to the analysis that's being done on this
10 application for certification during the siting
11 phase.

12 And that is pretty much about what the
13 compliance process is. And this goes on for the
14 life -- we monitoring the operation of the project
15 for the life of the project, not matter how long
16 that could be, 20, 30 years or longer, if
17 necessary.

18 I have cards if anyone is interested.
19 And then there's also on the website, I don't
20 believe they put it on till later in the process,
21 but they do create a compliance project page
22 associated with a particular project. And then my
23 name and information will be on there if you need
24 to contact me.

25 Thanks.

1 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Okay, thank
2 you, everyone, for those excellent presentations.
3 Very informative.

4 The Committee will review the proposed
5 schedule and the comments submitted by the
6 applicant with respect to the schedule, and issue
7 a scheduling order which will constitute the
8 expected schedule for the case. Sometimes, as Mr.
9 Meyer pointed out, unavoidable, things occur that
10 you can't -- that will affect the schedule. But
11 for the most part we'll try to stick to the
12 schedule that will be set forth by the Committee
13 in the next few days.

14 At this point I think we will move into
15 our public comment period. I have a card first
16 indicating that Imperial County Supervisor Gary
17 Wyatt is here. Mr. Wyatt, did you wish to speak?

18 SUPERVISOR WYATT: Yes.

19 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: All right,
20 please come forward. I'm sure you're used to
21 speaking in this room, so.

22 SUPERVISOR WYATT: Maybe, a couple
23 times. Maybe this morning, as a matter of fact.

24 (Laughter.)

25 SUPERVISOR WYATT: Good afternoon and

1 thank you for being here today, and for everyone
2 else that has attended this very critically
3 important meeting. Not only for this project, but
4 we believe for our county, as a whole.

5 Let me start, I have asked, about a half
6 hour ago, if they could find out why it's about
7 150 degrees in here. You know, when summer has
8 already ended, and so hopefully we can get it
9 cooler than it is now in the room.

10 I'll keep my comments very brief. It's
11 just plain and simple. We sent a letter in; we'll
12 be commenting further, I believe, as a county.
13 But I'm here to re-register those particular
14 feelings and my own personal feelings on this
15 particular project.

16 This particular project, we believe, is
17 the beginning of a great deal of opportunities our
18 county has been looking for for many many years.
19 We are the answer to many of the needs of people
20 throughout the southwest and throughout
21 California.

22 We are the home of renewable energy. We
23 believe that we are the county that could
24 literally become the capital of renewable energy
25 in the United States. Between geothermal, solar,

1 and wind power we believe that we could produce
2 thousands and thousands of megawatts.

3 What we do need, of course, with this is
4 we cannot magically move this power from here to
5 those centers that need that power through some
6 other type of technology, other than transmission
7 lines. And we need transmission lines. This
8 project specifically needs that.

9 But we believe this is a great
10 renewable, clean project that will do tremendous
11 things, not only for our county, but for others,
12 as well.

13 Being a rural county, a small county,
14 that sits next to a million people to our south
15 and millions and millions of people to the west
16 and to the north, we've given a great deal of our
17 resources sometimes not so willingly, in the form
18 of water and other types of things. And now when
19 we are trying to give the power, we hope that you
20 will work with us to make that happen.

21 We want to do it in a responsible
22 manner, of course. And all the compliance issues
23 must, of course, be followed. But this is about
24 meeting the needs not only for the RPS for areas
25 outside of ours, but also to meet the needs for

1 this area.

2 We're historically one of the highest
3 unemployment areas in the United States; in excess
4 of 20 percent. When I saw the other day they were
5 complaining in areas that their unemployment had
6 gone up to 6 percent and 8 percent, we would be so
7 ecstatic if our unemployment rates were just down
8 around 10 percent. But historically they've been
9 anywhere from 17 to 25 percent per year.

10 It's unbelievable that that could occur
11 year after year, and we've been working very hard
12 to help that to be different than that.

13 This project will be the beginning of
14 that type of thing. This is the future for our
15 Valley. It brings a new industry other than just
16 farming. We'll always have farming, but we
17 believe that renewable energy is something that's
18 very viable for our Valley. And we can provide
19 the answers and the solutions for many of the
20 other parts of the southwest United States and all
21 of California.

22 We encourage you to help us get this
23 through and get it passed, and get it built.
24 That's what we would like to see done. Imperial
25 County stands strongly behind Stirling Energy's

1 project.

2 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Mr. Wyatt,
3 thank you for being here.

4 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.
5 John Menvielle, did you wish to speak?

6 MR. MENVIELLE: Yes, thank you. Good
7 afternoon. I'm John Pierre Menvielle, President
8 of the Imperial Irrigation District Board of
9 Directors.

10 I am here to speak in favor of the
11 Stirling Energy Systems solar project in the
12 Imperial Valley.

13 IID is the third largest public power
14 provider in the State of California, and is a
15 staunch supporter of the development of renewable
16 energy resources within its service area.

17 We view projects like this one as being
18 essential to spurring the growth and development
19 of this emerging segment of the regional economy.
20 The District has committed its own resources to
21 upgrading its transmission systems to promote the
22 growth and development in the coming years.

23 As an energy balancing authority we
24 applaud Stirling's innovative technology. As an
25 irrigation district, we are greatly encouraged by

1 the efficiency measures it will employ to conserve
2 water.

3 And as a leading public sector employer
4 and corporate citizen with an obvious stake in the
5 economic progress of the communities we serve, we
6 look forward to the hundreds of jobs the company
7 will create in the future.

8 If IID can be of any further assistance
9 in moving this project forward through the scoping
10 process, you may be assured that we stand ready to
11 do so. Thank you.

12 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.
13 Very good. And let's see, Mark, I believe it's
14 Gran -- did I get that right? And your
15 affiliation?

16 COUNCILMEMBER GRAN: I'm a City
17 Councilmember for the City of Imperial. And I
18 have to make a disclaimer at this point in time I
19 can't represent the City Council or the City,
20 since we haven't brought this subject up in front
21 of the forum. But I'm saying this as an elected
22 official and a resident of the County.

23 I have to reiterate what Mr. Wyatt and
24 Mr. Menvielle said in that I do support this
25 wholeheartedly. We have the opportunity to build

1 a center for renewable energy. And just
2 coincidentally, I also work for a renewable energy
3 company, Cal Energy, which does geothermal. And
4 so this could be the economic driver that we need
5 in this Valley. And we look forward to your
6 support on that.

7 Mr. Wyatt mentioned that we're the
8 highest unemployment. We're also the lowest per
9 capita income. And we need industries that bring
10 jobs to the area that pay more than minimum wage.
11 And this would do that, and start to bring these
12 renewable energy companies here and show them that
13 it can be done. And we also need the Sunrise
14 Power Link to get this power out of here.

15 So we look forward to your support in
16 getting this project going. Thank you.

17 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you very
18 much. And so far everybody's doing a great job of
19 keeping it brief so we can stay on schedule. And
20 I'll just remind everybody to keep that in mind.

21 Let me ask Marlene Best of Imperial
22 Valley Economic Development to come up.

23 MS. BEST: Good afternoon, ladies and
24 gentlemen. Thank you for coming here to Imperial
25 County; we certainly welcome you.

1 From the Imperial Valley Economic
2 Development Corporation's mission statement, we
3 are here to help promote and market economic
4 development opportunities for our county, for our
5 region as a whole.

6 We have a strong agricultural background
7 in our area which allows us to fee the nation. We
8 are very interested in supplying the opportunity
9 for Stirling Energy to help us power the nation.
10 We would like the opportunity for this project to
11 move forward. We've heard many comments already
12 about our poverty levels, our economic levels and
13 our interest in promoting and supporting those.

14 And we are here from the Economic
15 Development Corporation to support this project
16 and urge your agreement on this project.

17 Thank you very much.

18 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.
19 Connie Bergmark.

20 MS. BERGMARK: Hi; my name is Connie
21 Bergmark. I'm with Imperial Lakes; we are the
22 closest residential community to the project.
23 Jennifer Donovan standing with me here. We are
24 both property owners there. I've been a property
25 owner there for about 18 years.

1 We would like to say that Stirling
2 Energy came out and briefed us on the project back
3 in April. We certainly appreciate that. They
4 gave us a rundown, pretty much the same slide show
5 that we had here today. So we got to see the
6 technology and the impacts on our residential
7 community. We are very impressed, and we
8 appreciate the time that they spent with us.

9 We would encourage ongoing communication
10 on the project so we're kept in the loop as far as
11 the construction impacts, operational impacts.
12 But other than that, we support the renewable
13 energy in the Valley. And all of our homeowners
14 wholeheartedly support the project. Thank you.

15 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Ms. Donovan, do
16 you want to add anything?

17 MS. DONOVAN: No, that's it. We're very
18 excited about the project. I live here full time,
19 so I also am very excited about the opportunity
20 for new jobs and new economic improvements here in
21 the Valley. So we support Stirling Energy a
22 hundred percent.

23 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Thank you.

24 MS. DONOVAN: Thank you.

25 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.

1 Mauricio Lam.

2 MR. LAM: My name is Mauricio Lam and
3 I'm here to share a few words in support of this
4 power generation project in Imperial County.

5 Many people from other areas identify
6 the Imperial County as an area with diverse
7 economic activities, as well as having a great
8 potential to offer new opportunities to business
9 in the area.

10 We have land, we have power, water, and
11 most importantly, qualified labor. The fact that
12 Stirling Energy is interested in developing this
13 project in our community has to be well seen by
14 us. Why, many of us may ask. Because besides
15 creating jobs during its construction, which are
16 estimated to be around 700 new jobs, and during
17 its operation, estimated about to be 200, the
18 project will bring additional invaluable benefits.

19 The generation systems proposed for this
20 particular plant will not use any type of fossil
21 fuel or gases that when combusted or burned
22 generate gases that are discharged directly into
23 the open atmosphere, contributing towards the
24 greenhouse effect condition and deteriorate the
25 air quality.

1 The proposed fuel for this plant is a
2 hundred percent natural, abundant and
3 inexhaustible. It is available almost 365 days of
4 the year. I am referring to the solar energy.
5 This abundant energy that irradiates every day in
6 our region and does not contaminate.

7 Solar energy does not produce gases, and
8 we will always have a state of the art example of
9 a power plant in our community that we will see
10 improving as technology advances to make these
11 systems more reliable and efficient.

12 In a summary way I would like to
13 encourage and promote this type of projects. This
14 project, besides producing the power we use and
15 require in our daily lives, also take care of our
16 environment.

17 The most important benefit is that
18 beside ours, as a community of Imperial Valley, we
19 will be ceding a great benefit for the future
20 generations to come with this sustainable project.
21 That production of clean power is vital for our
22 future generations and provide us with a better
23 quality of life.

24 Thank you.

25 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Thank you,

1 Mr. Lam. Did you have an affiliation you wanted
2 to share with us?

3 MR. LAM: Yes. I'm with Nolte
4 Associates; we're a local engineering and
5 surveying firm.

6 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Thank you.

7 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Okay. Dennis
8 Trafecanty. Sorry if I mispronounced that.

9 MR. TRAFECANTY: Hello; my name's Dennis
10 Trafecanty. I'm with the Protect Our Communities
11 Fund, which is at the San Diego Foundation, a not-
12 for-profit fund. We embark on trying to protect
13 our communities from unnecessary developments and
14 other environmental issues and education for our
15 children.

16 I have a great deal of concern. I don't
17 mean to pour cold water on something, but I have a
18 great deal of concern about SES and their project.
19 This is like a startup. There's seven units, to
20 my knowledge, in the whole country, and in the
21 world, that are in prototype stage. And we're
22 talking about in one year approving a project.

23 There's no way on God's green earth that
24 we will ever be able to go to commercial
25 production on something like this. I'm a CFO, I'm

1 a business owner in Poway. By the way, in Poway
2 it was 82 degrees when I left today. When I got
3 here it was 82 degrees. The sun was shining in
4 San Diego; it does shine in San Diego.

5 This is also a key renewable project
6 that SDG&E has been touting for three years as a
7 basis for approval of the proposed Sunrise Power
8 Link project.

9 I understand there's a hundred million
10 of money that SES has garnered through a
11 commitment from a, I think a Danish firm, but
12 anyway, a firm from a foreign county.

13 I heard on the slides, or saw on the
14 slides that this is a \$1 billion project. So the
15 funding isn't in place. Why would you approve
16 something unless you were sure funding was in
17 place and it was a viable project.

18 By the way, I have an article here from
19 USA Today, in February. I'm happy to give it to
20 you if you want it. There's a lot of questions
21 about this project.

22 I know that Southern Cal Edison sold the
23 technology to Stirling for something like
24 \$300,000. And Edison even ordered some of these
25 units. And it's in this article. And I don't

1 think Edison wants them anymore. And part of it
2 has to do with their ability to develop the
3 project.

4 I've been involved in the Sunrise Power
5 Link project for three years. And I haven't seen
6 any changes to what's going on. Of course, I'm
7 not privy to that, but it isn't anywhere near
8 commercial.

9 So why would we want to give away 6000
10 acres of public lands to a company that's a
11 startup, that doesn't have enough money to finish
12 the project -- what prudent investor is going to
13 invest in that? Are you going to allow the
14 ratepayers to pay \$2 billion to put a line into
15 San Diego, and then ultimately up to L.A. which
16 has to be added to the cost of this? They need
17 the Sunrise Power Link, that's what they said.
18 That has to be added to the cost.

19 San Diego doesn't need any power until
20 2014, that's what the ALJ Steven Weissman said in
21 connection with the EIR/EIS hearings. We believe
22 it's 2017.

23 It was in the Wall Street Journal just
24 this week, 3 percent decline in power usage
25 countrywide. Wonder what's that go to do with?

1 Probably the economy. I know I just bought a fuel
2 efficient car.

3 SWPPL, Sunrise -- Southwest Power Link,
4 built in 1984, 24 years ago, touting geothermal.
5 Check the records. They've got 60 megawatts of
6 geothermal on the Sunrise Power Link. And people
7 here, there's the worst health hazard in the
8 country right here in Imperial Valley for
9 children, elderly and all of us in the middle,
10 because of asthma. It's that powerline in
11 Mexicali that San Diego Gas and Electric's parents
12 built. And they're bringing LNG from the far
13 east.

14 So this isn't just an open desert. The
15 powerlines will desecrate the open desert. It
16 will desecrate the remote back country wilderness.
17 Anza Borrego Desert State Park, no, it's not just
18 north county. You're going through Anza Borrego
19 Desert State Park in south county, as well.
20 Nature Conservancy just bought the land to
21 designate as part of the park.

22 So, don't endanger our bighorn sheep
23 population and the migration by going right
24 through the park. That's their only corridor to
25 the herds in Mexico.

1 So, Mr. Wyatt, geothermal, solar and
2 SES, okay. You'll be paying for the health
3 concerns of your residents of Imperial Valley
4 because when a project fails you're going to be
5 getting more dirty fossil fuel from Mexico thanks
6 to SDG&E's parents, Semptra's projects down there.
7 And you're going to have to take care of those
8 children.

9 Thank you.

10 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Mr. Trafecanty,
11 I heard you say you work in Poway. Are you a
12 resident here or do you live in Poway?

13 MR. TRAFECANTY: I'm a resident in Santa
14 Isabel and I work in Poway. I'm a business owner
15 in Poway.

16 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Thank you, sir.

17 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: All right,
18 thank you. Laura McDonald.

19 MS. McDONALD: Hi, Laura McDonald,
20 representing San Diego Gas and Electric. I am the
21 Project Manager for the Sunrise Power Link
22 project.

23 And I, too, just wanted to voice my
24 support and the company's support for the Stirling
25 Energy Solar Two project. As you know, San Diego

1 Gas and Electric has an RPS mandate to meet 20
2 percent renewables by 2010. We recently
3 voluntarily supported the 33 percent goal that the
4 Governor has set forth.

5 So we're pleased to be a partner with
6 Stirling Energy on this project. We're thrilled
7 to see the project moving forward. Hopefully
8 we'll have a decision on the Sunrise Power Link in
9 the middle of December. And then we'll see both
10 of these projects go forward. Good for the
11 Imperial Valley; good for San Diego; and good for
12 the California region.

13 So, thank you very much.

14 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.
15 Carroll Buckley.

16 MR. BUCKLEY: Carroll Buckley, President
17 of the El Centro Chamber of Commerce and Visitors
18 Bureau. On behalf of the El Centro Chamber and
19 Visitors Bureau, thank you for visiting today.

20 The Chamber is on record with a policy
21 statement that says, in part, we support policies
22 that encourage the generation of additional local
23 energy, including production of renewable energy
24 resources for export and local consumption,
25 provided that renewable energy projects are

1 consistent with land use policies and
2 environmental impacts are fully mitigated.

3 On behalf of the Chamber of Commerce we
4 support the project. We support the jobs. The
5 fact that renewable energy sources are being
6 mandated, where are you going to build them, how
7 are you going to get that renewable energy,
8 Imperial County has the answers.

9 I have my comments in writing if you
10 would like them.

11 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.
12 Karen Collins.

13 MS. COLLINS: I am an anthropologist. I
14 am not associated with anybody, but I do live down
15 here.

16 To begin with I am concerned simply that
17 the energy is going to San Diego and that we're
18 not getting it. I would have thought that IID
19 would have done something about trying to get
20 something, but, you know, that's IID.

21 I am also concerned with what is the
22 life expectancy of these dish. In 50 years are we
23 going to have a bunch of abandoned large solar
24 things sitting out there in the desert? I think
25 that would be really ugly.

1 I am for solar energy. I am concerned
2 at the location because of the cultural resources.
3 The area that has been selected actually impacts
4 two areas on the National Register. You have the
5 shoreline for Lake Kuwae. We are in the middle of
6 a desert, but we used to have a great big huge
7 lake here, which basically ran from one side of
8 the ag field to the other side of the ag fields.
9 And you have the shoreline for Lake Kuwae.

10 You also have the discontinuous district
11 for the Yuha Intaglios, which are both out there.
12 So you have impacts to that. There's also a
13 number of cremations that are out in that general
14 area, too.

15 I personally believe that there are
16 other areas, particularly in some of the fallowed
17 ag lands that probably would be cheaper to put it
18 in. And from a cultural resource standpoint would
19 be a lot more economical to put it in.

20 It would also put them closer to water
21 because the west side main is the last point at
22 which water will gravity flow. So that means that
23 they're going to have to wind up pumping all their
24 water out there. It's not going to be a gravity
25 flow system like we've got in the rest of it.

1 And we don't have enough water out in
2 Plaster City to wind up doing wells, because
3 Plaster City is already having to bring in water
4 from Aquatia from the aquifer out there. So there
5 isn't the water.

6 So, those are basically my concerns.
7 Thank you.

8 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Tim Kelly.

9 MR. KELLY: Tim Kelly, President and CEO
10 of the Imperial Valley Economic Development
11 Corporation.

12 First of all, thank the Commissioners
13 for being here today. And I'd like to thank the
14 investment already made by Stirling Energy in
15 Imperial County. They've been a very good, I want
16 to say resident, because it seems like we see them
17 so often we think they live here.

18 But the amount of money that they've
19 already been spending in developing the project,
20 at lunch today I saw probably about 20 of them.
21 And that sales tax for our community.

22 (Laughter.)

23 MR. KELLY: They attended our education
24 workforce conference; and they gave a
25 presentation, in addition, to our energy

1 conference. The hotel rooms that they stayed in
2 were a benefit to not only the City's but the
3 County of Imperial.

4 And we support this project for several
5 different reasons. First of all, the economy, the
6 value that it's going to bring to the economy of
7 the Imperial Valley. And the ancillary businesses
8 that will need to support the SES Two.

9 The jobs that will be created. I sit on
10 the workforce development board. We've already
11 had meetings with Stirling Energy. And looking at
12 the future workforce and what the job creation is
13 going to be, and when we start developing not only
14 the training for those jobs, but also placement of
15 those jobs, and looking at funding that can be
16 available, not only through the Workforce
17 Investment Act, but also from the employment
18 training panel and other resources available.

19 In addition to that, Imperial Valley
20 College has already had meetings with Stirling
21 Energy to start adapting programs for renewable
22 energy specifically for this project. It's not
23 just one type of employee that will work the
24 Stirling Energy Systems, probably about a half a
25 dozen or more types of jobs. And those jobs are

1 going to be very high paying. And it's going to
2 need a very diverse type of training program.

3 The environment, that's probably the
4 biggest issue in Imperial Valley, PM10s. And so
5 we talked about asthma and things like that. But
6 this is actually going to be a dust mitigation
7 project. That location is the dustiest area in
8 Imperial County.

9 Stirling Energy Systems Two and the
10 other project, it's going to decrease the amount
11 of dust coming from that area.

12 Tourism. Just about every place I've
13 been in the world when people talk about what is
14 there to see, they talk about projects such as
15 renewable energy and others. And this will be a
16 project that will bring people from outside the
17 area, not only to see Stirling Energy Two, but
18 also the other projects in Imperial County such as
19 geothermal, solar and some of the other projects
20 such as biodiesel that are taking place in
21 Imperial County today.

22 And, of course, energy. The energy that
23 can be produced here goes onto the grid, first of
24 all, and will reduce the amount of energy that
25 will be needed from fossil fuels, as we mentioned

1 before.

2 But there is a demand in San Diego. And
3 so we support it for that reason. The Imperial
4 Irrigation District will also benefit, which will
5 keep the rates in Imperial County lower.

6 Thank you.

7 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.
8 Christina Luhn.

9 DR. LUHN: Good afternoon. My name's
10 Dr. Christina Luhn. I'm with the San Diego
11 Regional Economic Development Corporation. And
12 I'm Project Manager for a project called the
13 MegaRegion Initiative, which is a long-term
14 economic development strategy partnering San Diego
15 County, Imperial County and Baja, California for
16 global competition.

17 The key to this project is to brand and
18 market the region around targeted industries that
19 are complementary. Clean tech, which includes
20 renewable energy, is the key industry that we've
21 targeted.

22 But the underlying rationale and the
23 reason that we received a \$225,000 economic
24 development administration grant through the
25 Department of Commerce is because of job

1 creations. And not just any kind of jobs, but
2 jobs in industries that have a future. Not that
3 are on the tail-end of being obsolete.

4 So, for that particular reason, and I'm
5 from San Diego, for the energy, as well, we
6 support Stirling.

7 Thank you.

8 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.

9 Steve Taylor.

10 MR. TAYLOR: Good afternoon. My name's
11 Steve Taylor; I work with San Diego Gas and
12 Electric. And I am the Contract Manager for the
13 Stirling project.

14 I'm speaking in fervent support of the
15 Stirling project, since it's an integral part of
16 our efforts to meet San Diego Gas and Electric's
17 renewable portfolio standard.

18 This project is even more important
19 given Governor Schwarzenegger's recent
20 announcement of trying to have 33 percent of our
21 energy met with renewable power.

22 And, for the record, SDG&E does believe
23 in their technology. SDG&E also supports the
24 Governor's efforts to clear the red tape for
25 permitting renewable projects. And I certainly

1 look to all of you to move that spirit forward as
2 soon as possible.

3 SDG&E currently has 6 percent of our
4 portfolio coming from renewable energy. We have
5 15 percent under contract for 2010. And we have
6 21 percent for 2011. So we are well on our way.

7 SDG&E is committed to working with all
8 the parties in this proceeding to make this
9 project a reality. Thank you very much.

10 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.
11 Carmen, can't really read the last name --

12 MS. LUCAS: Lucas.

13 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Lucas.

14 MS. LUCAS: Good afternoon, I guess I
15 didn't write hard enough. My last name is Lucas,
16 L-u-c-a-s. It's really easy.

17 I am a Quimay Indian from Laguna
18 Mountain. My interest here is a bit different.
19 I'm 73 years old and I'm reflecting, after hearing
20 everybody speak, that you live long enough the
21 culture is no longer yours. I think perhaps I'm
22 at that threshold.

23 I would caution you all, even the
24 audience, we're in desperate times. Nobody really
25 knows what we're about to embark financially in

1 this country, as well as economic avenues.

2 I will only say that just because it
3 does concern me for your future, the future of
4 your children, the future of your grandchildren.

5 So when we're in desperate times we do
6 desperate things. I probably won't live long
7 enough to see this project through to its final
8 conclusion. I don't know if that's a blessing or
9 not.

10 But just to give you a little bit of
11 history, as an Indian in San Diego County, you
12 know, we lived in this environment from coast to
13 coast. That's the Pacific Ocean to the Colorado
14 River. Continuously for over 10,000 years without
15 the use of electricity, without the use of cars,
16 without the use of money.

17 But we did that with intellect that knew
18 how to work with this environment and the rhythm
19 of the environment and we moved back and forth.
20 That evidence is still on the ground, and it's out
21 there south of Plaster City.

22 I would ask you, in your process here,
23 please make it a requirement that a Native
24 American monitor be on the initial surveys of
25 these projects. We are best qualified to identify

1 sacred landscapes. We are best qualified to
2 identify the cultural resources. We are best
3 qualified to identify human remains. We don't
4 need to argue with people, we know our history.

5 I would like to thank BLM and your
6 archeologist, Carrie Simmons, for making it
7 possible for me to make a site visit out there. I
8 would have preferred to have worked on the
9 project. I think it's crucial that we have an
10 understanding it's not just Imperial County, it's
11 all of the Colorado desert region. BLM manages a
12 big part of all of it, so we're not dealing with
13 just solar projects, we're also dealing with
14 geothermal projects, SDG&E.

15 I grew up understanding that the desert
16 was a dangerous place. We saw mirages out there.
17 I can still hear my father sitting at the
18 fireplace talking about the old women burying gold
19 because we got killed for having gold.

20 I can still remember that you didn't
21 cross that desert till the evening when it was
22 safe to do that. Today we have air conditioning
23 and we take that all for granted, not really
24 realizing what the consequences of that is.

25 So these are the things I'd like to

1 bring to the record and just ask you again to be
2 very careful. I do know that in this area you
3 have an enormous deposit of pottery which tells me
4 that you have a sacrifice burial area.

5 I do know the Heritage Commission, Dave
6 Zinkelcan (phonetic) called me and asked me to be
7 here today because there were two human remains
8 that were identified in that area. The Heritage
9 Commission wants that on the record. They want to
10 know that these resources are being protected and
11 looked after.

12 I would be concerned. I know you
13 indicated in your discussion here that these
14 things won't have much ground disturbance, but I
15 would also say that's probably a plus, but I don't
16 know that it is, because you're going to have to
17 go from someplace to get them there. There's
18 going to be a lot of activity.

19 And in the past, young folks who work on
20 these projects really don't care where they're
21 going. So, there's a lot of things on that ground
22 that will be impacted. So there'll have to be
23 some way to protect those resources, particularly
24 the human remains.

25 So with that thought in mind, I thank

1 you for the opportunity to speak. And I, again,
2 would ask you to seriously consider those
3 comments. Thank you.

4 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.
5 Elias Felix.

6 MR. FELIX: Good afternoon, everybody.
7 My name is Elias Felix. I'm associated with Nolte
8 Associates, and I'm here today to express my
9 support for this project.

10 I believe that it will generate growth
11 for the community. It will also promote economic
12 development. And I believe it's also a great
13 opportunity for higher education to better
14 understand the energy production alternatives and
15 sustainable solutions for our communities.

16 Thank you very much.

17 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.
18 Donna Tisdale.

19 MS. TISDALE: Thank you. I'm actually
20 an elected Chairperson on the Boulevard Community
21 Planning Group, but I was born and raised in
22 Imperial Valley, and I own farmland here. And
23 some of it's being explored now for geothermal
24 energy. I just want to put that on the record,
25 but I'm speaking for myself, as an individual.

1 And this project is not unrelated to the
2 Sunrise Power Link project, which Imperial Valley
3 supports the southern route, which actually will
4 bulldoze its way through the eastern San Diego
5 County area, my community. And part of that
6 process, it downgrades -- BLM has downgraded
7 20,000 acres, -- resource management, to
8 accommodate not only the Power Link, but also
9 industrial wind turbines.

10 And Sunrise Power Link, SDG&E and Sempra
11 and Cal-ISO have said there's only 80 megawatts of
12 capacity left on the Southwest Power Link right
13 now. Now, Stirling and others have said that the
14 first 300 megawatts can be moved without Sunrise.

15 Well, my question is, who's telling the
16 truth. You know, is there 300 megawatts capacity?
17 Is there only 80 megawatts capacity? I know that
18 Sempra had to amend their application for their --
19 permit, for their cross-border powerline at Acumba
20 to accommodate the Cal-ISO's 80 megawatt
21 declaration.

22 Also the BLM land use amendment, I hope
23 they do it better than they did the one for
24 Sunrise through eastern San Diego County where
25 they amended the plan in a whole separate document

1 for the Sunrise Power Link, rather than a plan
2 amendment for the updated resource management
3 plan. They issued those things within days of
4 each other. We're looking at the legal recourse
5 on that.

6 Also we have Cumia Windfarm up there,
7 and promises of jobs were one of the big
8 promotions. Well, they brought in Norwegian --
9 people from Norway, to put up the turbines. So my
10 concern here is not just for the project, itself,
11 the environmental impacts, but the
12 misrepresentation to the community. This is not a
13 wealthy community.

14 And I hope they're not asking for -- and
15 I brought this up in the preapplication, I hope
16 they are not going to ask for tax breaks and tax
17 credits and incentives from this community, when
18 they should be considering building a factory
19 here, if this is what they're really going to do.
20 And they're really going to manage to make it a
21 go, why don't they build a factory here and employ
22 people here, rather than bring in people from
23 elsewhere, ship the energy elsewhere and just, you
24 know, make a few little side promises here and
25 there.

1 Because when the rubber hits the road
2 quite often promises fall by the wayside. And
3 Imperial Valley has been left in the dust of quite
4 a few of these promises.

5 I also wanted to say that I look at the
6 simulation, I drive back and forth from my home in
7 Boulevard, eastern San Diego County, to the Valley
8 for the ranch and my family, I'm worried about the
9 reflection of those mirrors on drivers. I mean
10 what about public health and safety. They say it
11 follows the sun, so if you're driving, you know,
12 -- what is the reflection rate on that?

13 We also have the Navy Air Base here and
14 I'm sure they've been brought into the loop, but
15 it is a concern.

16 Also the Division of Ratepayer Advocates
17 and the Utility Consumer Action Network have done
18 research on the Sunrise Power Link. I, myself,
19 have read about 10,000 pages of it. And they say
20 this is not in the best interests of the
21 ratepayers and cannot be justified.

22 And when you add in the cost of
23 renewable energy from projects like Stirling Solar
24 and all these industrial projects, the cost to the
25 ratepayers are phenomenal. Where are those

1 figures? We're not seeing those figures.

2 And I'm afraid in this economy, when
3 people are struggling to pay their bills and their
4 mortgages, how are they going to pay for the cost
5 of this renewable energy? That's not brought up.

6 Now, Imperial Valley, they have their
7 own utility and they may be affected differently.
8 But I pay rates in San Diego County to SDG&E and
9 California's going to have to pay for the utility
10 for Sunrise Power Link.

11 So all this needs to be taken into
12 consideration. So, anyway, thank you very much.

13 Also, cumulative impacts, 2.5 million
14 acres have been applications for right-of-way for
15 BLM lands. So, sun, wind, solar, cumulative
16 impacts.

17 Thank you.

18 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you.

19 Edie Harmon.

20 MS. HARMON: Edie Harmon. And I've
21 lived out in the Ocotillo area for more than 30
22 years. And so when I come into the Valley I come
23 past this area. I would argue that the area
24 that's being proposed, almost more than 6000
25 acres, is not an area that's heavily impacted now,

1 and not a major generator of dust.

2 However, it is south of the Plaster City
3 offroad vehicle open area, which is a major
4 generator of dust and blowing sand. It is to the
5 east of 1000 acres that were bulldozed east of New
6 Mirage that, in times of wind, there are times you
7 cannot tell the difference between the soil and
8 the sky because there is so much blowing dust and
9 sand.

10 And when I read proposals and I've read
11 a lot of the details on this project, and I look
12 at moving parts, the dish umbrellas, and I'm
13 wondering what happens, given the fine dust -- we
14 have what we call blow-sand, which is so fine that
15 it ends up you can't even crank open windows
16 because the sand affects the cranking mechanism,
17 I'm wondering about putting 12,000, 30,000 dish
18 collectors in an area where there are really
19 strong quantities of blowing sand.

20 And I live probably less than five miles
21 from the mountains. There are times I cannot even
22 see the mountains from my house because the
23 particulate matter in the air is so great.

24 And so I think that is a real
25 consideration. It's not a dust mitigation area,

1 it's an area that's going to be very heavily
2 impacted by dust that's being generated offsite.

3 And when I go back home from the Valley
4 there are a lot of dirt roads. It's amazing how
5 much dust is generated by a single offroad vehicle
6 or a motorcycle or a pickup truck on a dirt road.
7 There's really a big plume.

8 And I think, from reading the documents
9 about the moveable parts and the mean time between
10 breakdown, between failure, and I've seen figures
11 as low as 40 hours before a unit has to be shut
12 down for maintenance, repair. I think it was the
13 CEC came out with a publication this year
14 suggesting that it would be several years before
15 they even get to the point where it's hundreds of
16 thousands of hours between time for breakdown,
17 whether it's hydrogen releases, problems with the
18 seals.

19 But also, and none of the things that
20 I've seen on failure deal with the problems of
21 what happens with dust and sand when you've got
22 moving mechanisms.

23 And I've seen winds come through that
24 will break down the limbs of a 12-inch diameter
25 tree and cause it to go down in the open desert.

1 I've seen eight-foot, ten-foot long two-by-sixes
2 flying through the air, sheets of plywood flying
3 through the air when chubascos come up from south
4 of the border.

5 I don't know what these kind -- and I
6 can be outside and five minutes later there'll be
7 a tremendous wind come through carrying things
8 through the air. I don't know whether these units
9 can close fast enough, and I don't know what
10 happens when debris, sand, dust ends up impacting
11 these mirrors.

12 I think the amount, when they're talking
13 about water for rinsing off, but what happens with
14 peak of these. And, you know, again, at the end,
15 if the project is not feasible you have a
16 tremendous amount of material that has to be --
17 has to end up somewhere.

18 As earlier speakers have said, I think
19 there's a real serious concern when you're talking
20 about going from prototype development where
21 you've got six units at Sandia National Laboratory
22 in New Mexico, which is an entirely different
23 climate, I suspect, with different vegetation, and
24 that they don't have the same dust and wind.

25 And going from a prototype of six units

1 to suddenly you're going to have 18,000 units out
2 here, exposed to the elements. And area with
3 over, when I looked at the BLM report on cultural
4 resources, I was just overwhelmed to think that
5 there would even be a serious proposal that would
6 have impacts in areas so culturally sensitive.

7 And after listening to Carmen Lucas, I
8 hope you'll realize there are a lot of people for
9 whom the past is very important.

10 And I think while we're talking about
11 renewable energy I would be far more impressed --
12 when I was at the pre -- meeting I asked, if this
13 grid-ready electricity every three units, why
14 aren't they proposing to put these units so that
15 they could generate electricity for Plaster City,
16 for the Centinela State Prison, which are very
17 close by, the hospitals, the schools.

18 Why aren't there proposals to generate
19 electricity that's going to go into the IID system
20 so that people in Imperial County, that must have
21 some of the highest per capita energy consumption
22 in the summer when it's 120, can have some
23 benefit?

24 And the answer to the question was it
25 wouldn't be profitable to use this technology to

1 generate electricity for use in Imperial County.
2 It would only be profitable if you were going to
3 build the Sunrise Power Link to transport that
4 energy to San Diego.

5 And I've seen the studies that are
6 coming out of San Diego and they're looking at the
7 potential for rooftop solar, photovoltaics,
8 distributed electricity. They've plenty of
9 parking lots, roofs, schools. A lot of people are
10 putting photovoltaic units on their homes, so
11 they're getting the energy during the day.

12 I would be far more impressed if there
13 were big energy proposals for Imperial County,
14 that we're proposing rooftop solar on all the flat
15 roofs, and to provide shade for all the parking
16 lots in Imperial County. Because that would truly
17 benefit the County and set an example for, you
18 know, technology for the future.

19 It's being done at Death Valley; it's
20 being done in places in Nevada. It's being done
21 elsewhere. I don't know why we're not looking at
22 the technologies that work rather than a
23 technology that wants more than 6000 acres of
24 public land with sensitive cultural resources to
25 turn into industrial sites to export an unproven

1 technology to San Diego.

2 I have lots of questions and I'm getting
3 them in writing. But I think there's a lot of
4 issues that have to be looked at, a good, hard
5 look.

6 And I feel like part of the reason that
7 some of these projects are coming to public lands
8 is because industry looks at public lands as a
9 less expensive way of getting the land base,
10 rather than looking at fallowed farmlands,
11 abandoned feedlots, areas where the soil is
12 sterile, parking lots or rooftops. Places where
13 there wouldn't be such impacts.

14 When you're disturbing land that has not
15 already been heavily impacted, you're reducing the
16 ability of those soils to sequester carbon. And
17 listening to Howard Wilshire, who spent 37 years
18 with USGS, he's concerned about the impacts of
19 some of these industrial-scale wind and solar
20 because they go on lands that aren't disturbed, it
21 has a negative impact on carbon sequestration on
22 those lands.

23 And I haven't heard anything or seen
24 anything on that issue related to this project.
25 But I think it needs to be looked at.

1 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: If I may, Ms.
2 Harmon brings up a number of issues. I'm not
3 going to try and address all of them, but I think
4 one merits just a brief explanation.

5 When we get an application from an
6 applicant we are obligated to respond to it. So,
7 she brought up a number of different issues which
8 we will consider, and the staff will look at very
9 carefully.

10 But we didn't create this application.
11 We have to evaluate it. I just want to make that
12 clear. Thank you.

13 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thomas Topuzes.

14 MR. TOPUZES: Good afternoon. My name
15 is Thomas Topuzes; I'm a local businessman from El
16 Centro. Welcome to the Valley. I'm the past
17 Chair of the Imperial Valley Economic Development
18 Corporation, and also I'm the Co-Chair of the
19 MegaRegion Initiative, which you heard about a
20 little bit earlier, working San Diego, Imperial
21 County and Baja, California.

22 I support the SES solar project.
23 Renewable energy, if you've been here anytime
24 after May, June, until about the end of October
25 you realize we have a lot of radiant solar energy

1 here.

2 I think this is a good place to have the
3 project. It's going to help California meet its
4 needs for energy. It's certainly going to help
5 job creation. I understand the latest
6 unemployment rate that we have, I heard it was 27
7 percent, which is not good.

8 Also, the program provides some
9 environmental benefits, certainly you know a lot
10 more about reduction of carbon footprints that
11 I'll ever know. And also greenhouse gases.

12 But the solar energy, it's there, we see
13 it every year. We think it can help California.
14 It certainly will help our people here. The
15 location has been studied and I appreciate the
16 fact that you're here and reviewing this. And we
17 certainly hope that you support it.

18 Thank you very much.

19 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you. Tom
20 Dubose.

21 MR. DUBOSE: Good afternoon. My name is
22 Tom Dubose. I am a co-owner of a local company
23 here called Development Design and Engineering.
24 We're a land-planning civil engineering/surveying
25 firm here in El Centro.

1 I'm also the Second Vice President of
2 the Building Industry Association, the Desert
3 Chapter. As you can imagine, that is a crippled
4 industry at this point.

5 And we need new opportunities and new
6 stimulus with which to put our people back to work
7 in building housing product.

8 I've lived here all my life. I've
9 raised my family. This is where I do business.
10 And I feel like that in Imperial County we've
11 always taken the approach of being more concerned
12 about ourselves than anyone else. And I'll give a
13 couple examples.

14 At great taxpayer expense to the
15 citizens of San Diego there was a long, drawn-out,
16 debated analysis of which to place an airport.
17 And at the end of the day when one of those
18 considerations was Imperial County, our approach
19 in Imperial County was to say that if you don't
20 want it, we'll take it. And we asked the populace
21 to vote on that. We didn't go to San Diego to say
22 you really don't want that, it's not good for you.

23 And so I get a little concerned when I
24 hear outside interests who say that they're
25 interested in our welfare. I think you will find,

1 through these hearings, that the majority of
2 people who are residents of Imperial County, are
3 going to tell you what we feel like is in our best
4 interests.

5 Because in the past we've been affected
6 by what somebody else doesn't or didn't want, but
7 you guys could take it down there.

8 As a business owner who built a new
9 office building, I tried to do the environmentally
10 right thing, and we were recognized and we
11 appreciated the District in recognizing us for our
12 energy efficiency in our new building.

13 And yet, when I get ready to solar that
14 rooftop up, I'm going to be lucky to generate
15 enough electricity for my office, much less
16 someone else's at another location.

17 As I look at some of the agencies and I
18 hear some of the agencies here over a period of
19 time, I think that we have looked upon some of
20 those agencies as a threat to our economy with
21 some of the decisions, whether it be offroad or
22 open-space use.

23 And I think this is an opportunity for
24 some of those same agencies to come to our rescue
25 and benefit us with this much-needed opportunity

1 of this new industry. This is something that I
2 think the majority of the citizens of Imperial
3 County want, and we're looking forward to, as we
4 need to continue to expand and grow opportunity.

5 We are providing, we believe, a service
6 to a lot of others, other than us. And, as
7 mentioned earlier, everybody seems to want to have
8 some of our resource. We'd like to have that
9 resource under our terms and conditions. And we
10 feel like the permitting through this process and
11 the hard work that you have to do will allow us to
12 do it.

13 The last thing I'll say is I'll not
14 profess to be an expert in something I don't know.
15 But what I do know and I'm very comfortable with,
16 as I deal with this every day, that the
17 environmental process that you are underway with
18 now will, in fact, sort out all of these issues.

19 And so when you get to that conclusion,
20 and we feel it will be positive, just remember
21 that the majority of the constituents and voters
22 and residents of Imperial County said that this is
23 something they want.

24 Thank you.

25 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Thank you. Do

1 you want to --

2 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Yes, I
3 understand that's all the folks that have
4 indicated they want to speak at this preliminary
5 hearing or site visit, as we refer to it.

6 I'd like to thank you all very much.
7 Excellent comments, all. It gives us a good
8 sense, as Commissioners, as to what the public
9 concerns are around this project.

10 But I'd like to emphasize that no
11 decision has been made. We will be making our
12 decision based upon facts and the evidence that's
13 presented before us.

14 There's a lot of work to do. If we were
15 to think of this as a football game, it's early in
16 the first quarter here. We have a long way to go
17 before we know the outcome of this proceeding.

18 And so I think, unless my Associate
19 Member has any other comments -- none? I think
20 we're ready to go take a tour. Mr. Renaud.

21 HEARING OFFICER RENAUD: Yes, I
22 understand there are buses waiting. Are they out
23 on Main, or do we know where they are? Probably
24 if everybody just troops downstairs it'll be --
25 it'll be self-evident.

1 And we'll board those and head out as
2 quickly as we can so we still have some daylight.

3 PRESIDING MEMBER BYRON: Exactly. Let's
4 proceed post haste. Thank you, all, very much.

5 (Whereupon, at 4:15 p.m., the
6 informational hearing was adjourned.)

7 --o0o--

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, TROY A. RAY, an Electronic Reporter,
do hereby certify that I am a disinterested person
herein; that I recorded the foregoing California
Energy Commission Hearing; that it was thereafter
transcribed into typewriting.

I further certify that I am not of
counsel or attorney for any of the parties to said
hearing, nor in any way interested in outcome of
said hearing.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set
my hand this 4th day of December, 2008.

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